CONJUGAL DUTY:

Set forth in a

COLLECTION

OF

INGENIOUS and DELIGHTFUL

WEDDING-SERMONS.

VIZ.

I. The Merchant-Royal: Or, Woman a Ship. By *Robert Wilkinſon.*
II. The Bridal-Buſh. By *H. Cornwallis.*
III. A Wedding-Ring fit for the Finger. By *William Secker.*
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VII. A Wife Miſtaken: Or, *Leah* inſtead of *Rachel.* By *T. Grantham.*
VIII. The Virgin Mary. By *T. Maſter.*

I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.
CANT. vi. 2.

LONDON:
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BRITISH MUSEUM

Advertiſement.

THE *following* COLLECTION *being moſt of them pretty ſcarce, the* MERCHANT-ROYAL *excepted, it was thought better to print them together, in a little Volume, than ſingly; not only as they all treat of the ſame Subject, but to leſſen the Price to the Publick. They are now reduced to little more than Two-pence each, and printed on a good Paper, and neat Character.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

We have added to this Edition of the MERCHANT-ROYAL; *the Author's Dedication, from his own* Quarto *Edition in* 1607, *which has been omitted (we know not for what Reaſon) in all the latter Editions in* Octavo. *If theſe* EIGHT *ſhould be kindly received, there are a few more on the ſame Subject, which are very ſcarce, that may ſerve to compleat one Volume in* Duodecimo.

24 OC 62

THE

THE

MERCHANT-ROYAL:

OR,

WOMAN a SHIP.

BRITISH MUSEUM

N. B. The following Dedication was printed with the Firſt Quarto Edition, publiſh'd by the Author in 1607, but has been omitted (we know not for what Reaſon) in all the latter Editions.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE *the Lord* HAY, *and to his late eſpouſed, the Lady* HONORIA; *the Author hereof wiſheth all Conſolation in Chriſt, continual Comfort in Marriage, together with a conſcionable Obſervance of the Contents of this Sermon.*

LO here (Right Honourable) preſented into your Hands what lately ſounded in your Ears. A Ship, firſt built in Paradiſe, and for the Pleaſure of the Land; but ſince repaired for the Merchant's Uſe, againſt the Troubles of the Sea; which, ſince I am enjoined to launch out into the

Main, and make publick, both beyond the Merit of the thing, and alſo beyond mine own Meaning, I could find none more fit unto whom to dedicate it now, in Print, than your Honourable ſelves, for whoſe Sake it was firſt preached. I hope I ſhall never make it the laſt End of my Labours, to pleaſe Man; yet I find, in this, that I have pleaſed ſome, and diſpleaſed others: But why ſhould I look to pleaſe all, whereas God himſelf hath ſo ſeldom done it? Therefore, they which think me too bitter, muſt yet remember, that I bite nothing but Sin; and what Reaſon is there to favour Sin, thro' Occaſion whereof the World was drown'd, to puniſh it? The Law was ordained to prevent it, the Son of the Higheſt died to ſatisfy for it, and the World again muſt be deſtroy'd to finiſh it: Yea, what Reaſon is there to favour any Sin, whereas there is no one which favoureth us; but all imperilling us in the Hope of Salvation; as *Eve*, by her Eating, undermined *Adam*. They again which think

think that Sin ſhould not be derided or corrected in this Kind, muſt alſo conſider, that every Sin is to be taxed in his proper Kind; as, in the Scripture, Sins ſavouring of Error are refelled with Arguments, and ſuch as be foul and heinous are beaten down with Judgments; but thoſe which were ridiculous were, indeed, derided; as *Elias* the Prophet ſported at the Prieſts of *Baal*, and *Job* at his fooliſh Comforters: Yea, and how plays *Iſaiah* with the wanton Geſtures of Women, *ſtretching out their Necks, mincing and tinckling with their Feet*, &c. [*Iſaiah* iii. 16.] But *Moſes* more with the Niceneſs of Women, *too dainty to venture* (not their Knees, in Devotion) but *the Soles of their Feet upon the Ground* [Deut. xxviii. 56.] no doubt a ſore Adventure! But nothing ſo taunting as that in *Solomon*, where the Whore is mock'd for a Votary, and ſhe that offered herſelf to other Mens Luſt, yet is ſet out for a Saint, with Offerings of Peace to God, [*Prov.* vii. 14.] I hope, therefore, all good

good People will privilege me by theſe holy Precedents; yea, I am ſure of this, that none will find Fault with me, but ſuch as firſt find a Fault in themſelves; and to ſuch I profeſs my ſelf indeed a Preacher, and to have preached all this for them; as Chriſt, in the Goſpel, profeſſed of himſelf, that *he came to call Sinners.* And thus, in my moſt true and ſincere Love, I commend you, in the midſt of your Marriage Joys, to that Joy and Peace which is in God.

Your Honours, in all
Chriſtian Devotion,

24 OC 62

Robert Wilkinſon.

THE MERCHANT ROYAL: OR, *WOMAN a SHIP.*

A SERMON Preached at *White-Hall*, before the King's Majesty; at the Nuptials of an Honourable LORD and his LADY.

The EPISTLE to the READER.

THERE are so many Paper Pyrates now abroad, that every wise Sailor will stand upon his Guard, and will not be laid aboard by every Hailer, lest he should be rifled of that Treasure he sails with.

But this our Ship is a ROYAL MERCHANT, *by which, if thou be a skilful Trader, thou may'st gain much.*

She comes from KING JAMES's *Court, and in those Days (as I have heard) there was plenty of Gold and Silver; but she is well fraught with that which is better than both.*

The Merchant's Design in shipping so much Treasure in one Vessel, was to inrich the whole Court at once; and my Design in publishing this BILL *of her Lading is thy Gain, not my Trade; for I have none of those precious Jewels to sell, but have had some of them freely given to me, and all of them are to be disposed at the same Rate. Therefore if thou dost not seek for it thou art to blame.*

PROV. xxxi. 14.

She is like a Merchant's Ship, ſhe bringeth her Food from far.

THIS Scripture, and in Effect this whole Chapter, is a Scripture written for Women; and more peculiarly a Scripture written in Praiſe of Women; yet not gloſingly, to make them better than they be, but ſoberly and truly to ſhew them what they ſhould be: A Scripture, wherein, as in a Glaſs, are ſet out to our View, all the Perfections and Ornaments, all the Dignity, Beauty, and Duty of a virtuous Wife and holy Woman. The Devil at the firſt began his Temptation by praiſing of the Woman, by telling her, That if ſhe knew her ſelf, ſhe wanted but one thing to make her like God; and from the Devil (I think) it comes, that ſo many Men ſince, in every Age, have ſo wantonly beſtowed their Time, their Wits, their Pens, and ſometimes their Pencils too, either vainly to magnify, or vilely to embaſe the Dignities of Women: The Cauſes of which Folly I take to be theſe, either for that generally they did not know them, and then they wrote foolihly; or for that ſometime they doted on them, and then they praiſed immoderately; or elſe for that ſometime they hated them, and then they railed furiouſly. But there are, to ratify the preſent Diſcourſe and Praiſe of Women, three things; Firſt, God, by whoſe Spirit it was conceived. Secondly, *Bathſheba*, a Woman, by whoſe Mouth it was taught. Thirdly, *Solomon*, a Man, yea the wiſeſt of Men, by whoſe Pen it was indited. That is to ſay, God inſpired it into the Mother, the Mother taught it to *Solomon* her Son, and then *Solomon* her Son publiſhed it to the World; therefore if we ſpeak of the Knowledge of a good Woman, who knoweth her better than her ſelf? Who knoweth her better than Man that liveth with her? Yea, who knoweth her ſo well as God that made her? Again, if in this Deſcription any thing might ſeem too much in Praiſe,

Praiſe, it was not a Woman, but a Man that wrote it; if any thing might ſeem too burthenſome, or grievous in Precept, it was not a Man, but a Woman that impoſed it; or if any thing might ſeem either too much or too little, or otherwiſe than it ſhould be, it was neither Man nor Woman, but God that firſt directed it: And thus in one Deſcription of a virtuous Wife and holy Woman (which is not in any other Author, nor yet elſewhere in any part of Scripture) we have a Man, a Woman, yea, God himſelf, and all out of one Mouth, ſpeaking and conſpiring; ſhe that hath Ears to hear, let her hear.

In the tenth Verſe of this Chapter *Solomon* makes Proclamation, *Who ſhall find a virtuous Woman?* Which yet importeth not (as St. *Auguſtin* noteth) *Inveniendi impoſſibilitatem, ſed difficultatem*; not as if to find a virtuous Woman were a matter of Impoſſibility, but yet for all that a thing of ſome Difficulty; and therefore he cryeth her with her Marks, *She will do her Husband good and not evil; ſhe riſeth while it is yet Night; ſhe putteth her Hands to the Wheel; ſhe ſtretcheth out her Hands to the Poor; ſhe openeth her Mouth to Wiſdom*, &c. Thus ſhewing ſometime what ſhe doth, ſometime what ſhe is, ſometime what ſhe is worth, and ſometimes what ſhe is like, as here, *She is like a Ship*.

She is indeed, and yet ſhe ſcarce is, and therefore becauſe ſhe is ſo ſcarce, it was needful to ſhew not only what ſhe is, but alſo what ſhe is like to; for how ſhall he find her that never ſaw her, that never had her, that ſcarce heard of her? how ſhall he find her but by ſome ſenſible Reſemblance of her? And therefore as *Cant.* v. when the Church cried her Husband (*I charge you O Daughters of* Jeruſalem, *if you find my Well-beloved*, &c.) ſhe deſcribed him by Reſemblance, *My Well-beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefeſt of ten thouſands, his Head is like Gold, his Eyes like Doves, his Cheeks like a Bed of Spices, his Lips like Lilies, his Legs like Pillars of Marble*: Every thing was like ſomething. So of the virtuous Woman it is ſaid here, that *ſhe is like a Ship*; and [*Prov.* xii.] *She is like a Crown*: and in the *Cant.* ſometimes like a Roſe, ſometimes like a Lily, ſometimes

like a Garden of Flowers, ſometimes like a Spring of Waters; in a Word, ſhe is like to many things, but as it is ſaid [Verſe 10.] *Pearls and precious Stones are not like to her.*

She is like a Ship (ſaith *Solomon*) and it may well be, for the World is like the Sea; for ſo ſaith St. *John*, *before the Throne there was a Sea of Glaſs* [Rev. 4.] and that was the World, tranſitory and brittle as Glaſs; tumultuous and troubleſome, like the Sea; wherein as the Wind raiſeth up the Waves, and one Wave wallows in the Neck of another; ſo this troubleſome Life of ours, begins in Weeping, goes on in Sorrow, and the End of one Woe is but the Entrance of another: O what Time might a Man ask to ſet down all the Miſeries of this Life! the Fear, the Care, the Anguiſh that daily accompanieth the Body and Soul of Man; the Labours and Sorrows certain, the Caſualties uncertain, the Contentions and Unquietneſs of them that live among us, the ſharp Aſſaults and Oppoſitions of them that hate us; but chiefly the Unfaithfulneſs and Treachery of them that ſeem to love us: Againſt theſe Storms, to ſave Men from drowning, did God ordain the Woman as a Ship upon the Sea, that as *Noah* made an Ark, and by that Ark eſcaped the Flood; ſo Man, by marrying with the Woman, might paſs through all the Labours of this Life; unto which doubtleſs God had reſpect when he ſaid, *It is not good for Man to be alone; let us make him a Help meet for him;* as much as to ſay a Ship to ſave him. Therefore he which hath no Wife, may ſeem to be like *Jonas* in the Sea, left in the midſt of a miſerable World, to ſink or ſwim, or ſhift for himſelf; but then comes a Wife, like a Ship, and wafts him home: But ye muſt ſtill remember that *Solomon* ſpeaketh here of a good Wife, as [Verſe 10.] *Who ſhall find a virtuous Woman?* For otherwiſe, if ſhe which was made to comfort in every Storm be ſtormy and troubleſome herſelf, then ſhe is not like a Ship, but like the Sea; and than to be ſo ſhipt, it were better with *Jonas* to be caſt into the Sea.

But if ſhe be good, ſhe is like a Ship indeed, and to nothing ſo like as to a Ship; for ſhe ſits at the Stern, and by

by Diſcretion, as by Card and Compaſs, ſhapes her Courſe; her Countenance and Converſation are ballaſted with Soberneſs and Gravity; her Sails are full of Wind, as if ſome Wiſdom from above had inſpired, or blown upon her; ſhe ſtandeth in the Shrowds, and caſteth out her Lead, and when ſhe hath ſounded, ſhe telleth, as *Michal* did to *David* [1 *Sam.* xix. 11.] of Depth and Danger; if by Default ſhe be grounded, ſhe caſteth out her Anchors, as *Rahab* did, [*Joſh.* ii. 21.] and by winding of her ſelf, ſhe gets a-float again. If ſhe ſpy within her Kenning any Trouble to be nigh, either ſhe makes forward, if ſhe find her ſelf able, or elſe, with *Pilate*'s Wife [*Mat.* xxvii. 19.] ſhe ſets Sail away, ſhe commands and countermands each Man to his Charge, ſome to their Tackling, ſome to the Maſt, ſome to the Main-top, as if ſhe, and none but ſhe, were Captain, Owner, Maſter of the Ship; and yet ſhe is not Maſter, but the Maſter's Mate; a Royal Ship ſhe is, for the King himſelf takes Pleaſure in her Beauty [*Pſal.* xlv.] and if ſhe be a Merchant's too, then is ſhe the *Merchant Royal*.

Again, as ſhe is like a Ship, conſider'd in her ſelf, and in her proper Virtues, ſo is ſhe likewiſe, being compared with her Owner too: She is like a Ship indeed, for firſt, whoſoever marries, ventures; he ventures his Eſtate, he ventures his Peace, he ventures his Liberty; yea, many Men by Marriage adventure their Souls too: For which cauſe the *Iſraelites* were forbidden to match their Daughters with the *Canaanites*, leſt they ſhould turn them from God to ſerve other Gods, [*Deut.* vii.] Which *Solomon* notwithſtanding did, and therefore made (as ſome Men thought) a ſhrewd Adventure of his Soul; and therefore (even to prevent too much Adventure likewiſe) is Marriage compared to a Ship, which, of all artificial Creatures, is the moſt deliberative; for ſhe ſails not but by ſounding, leſt by her Unheedineſs ſhe run her ſelf a-ground: In like manner, neither Man nor Woman will at any time (if they be wiſe) reſolve either of Marriage, or of any thing in Marriage, but upon the weighteſt Deliberation. He is ſet out for the Image of a Fool, that ſaid, *Villam emi*, &c. *I have bought a Farm, and*

I muſt needs go out to ſee it [Luke xiv. 18.] for he ſhould have ſeen it firſt, and bought it after; as it is ſaid of the virtuous Woman here, *She conſidereth a Field and gets it* [verſe 16.] That is, ſhe thinks of it firſt, and makes her Purchaſe after; and when either Man or Woman forget this in Marriage, they purchaſe Joy enough for the Day of their Marriage, and Repentance enough for all the Time after. It is ſaid of *Jephtha*'s Daughter, *That ſhe went out to bewail the Days of her Virginity* [Judg. xi.] but in truth many Mens Daughters may go out to bewail the Days of their Marriage; yea, and many Men too look back to the ſingle Life, as the *Egyptians* in the *Red-Sea* looked back to the Land [*Exod.* xiv.] and ſo they are puniſhed with late Repentance, like thoſe fooliſh Mariners [*Acts* xxvii.] who, becauſe they took not Counſel in the Haven, were forced to adviſe upon a Wreck. And what is the Cauſe of this? Lack of Forecaſt, becauſe they ſound not firſt, whether it be fit to marry, or yet to marry; or whether he be fit, or ſhe be fit; fit in Degree, in Diſpoſition, in Religion; and therefore as *Solomon* ſaith of Vowing, ſo ſay we of Marrying; *Be not raſh with thy Mouth:* But ſound firſt, and ſail after; that is, deliberate firſt, and marry after.

Again, ſhe is like a Ship for her univerſal Uſe. A Houſe is indeed to dwell in, but not to travel in; but a Ship is both to travel in, and as it were to dwell in too; to eat, and drink, and ſleep, and labour, and meditate, and pray too; as if to be in a Ship were to be in another Earth, the Water-world: In like manner, a Man hath a Friend for Pleaſure, a Servant for Profit, and for Uſes to God-ward a Spiritual Inſtructor too; but a Wife ſerves for all theſe, that is for Pleaſure, for Profit, and (if ſhe be good) to bring her Husband to Good too.

Again, of all theſe ſame *Utenſilia* (I mean of moveable Inſtruments) a Ship is the hugeſt and the greateſt, and yet commanded, as you ſee, by the Helm or Stern, a ſmall Piece of Wood; ſo ought the Wife, though a great Commander in the Houſe, yet to be turned and ruled by a Word of her Husband. *Solomon* ſaith not, ſhe is like a Houſe

a Houſe (as many Women be, as good remove a Houſe as to diſſwade or wean them from their Wills) but like a Ship; not like *Vaſhti* the Wife of *Ahaſuerus* [Eſth. i.] whom all the Power of the Kingdom could not move to come to her Husband, no not to the King himſelf; but ſhe muſt follow her Husband, as the *Iſraelites* followed the Cloudy Pillar in the Wilderneſs [*Numb.* ix.] which when it ſtood, they ſtayed, and when it went, they followed; and ſo muſt ſhe.

Laſtly, leſt any Man doat too much upon this Heavenly Ship of Earthly Joys, we muſt remember, That as a Ship is not a Place of continual Habitation, but only for Paſſage; ſo is the Society of the Wife, though comfortable and joyful for the time, yet laſting only for a time; a Help to hold him up and comfort him, during this tranſitory, ſhort, and troubleſome Pilgrimage; but then there is another, a happier, a more laſting Marriage with the Lamb, which neither Departure, Divorce, nor Death can ſeparate; and for this we muſt forſake Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Goods, Lands, *&c.* for this the Living muſt renounce his Life, the King muſt leave his Crown, the Bridegroom muſt leave his Bride, and the Bride muſt leave her Bed, becauſe for this the Saints do cry, *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.*

But as the Saying is in the Schools, *Similitudo non currit quatuor pedibus.* Many things may be like, yet nothing like in all things. Therefore, though a Woman in many things be like a Ship, yet in ſome things ſhe muſt be unlike, and ſome Qualities of a Ship ſhe muſt not have. As for Example, one Ship may belong to many Merchants, and one Merchant may be Owner in many Ships; yet neither may one Woman divide her Love to many Men, nor one Man divide himſelf to many Women; therefore *Lamech* ſpake with great Incongruity, yea, it was like falſe *Latin*, when he ſaid, *Hear ye Wives of* Lamech [*Gen.* iv. 23.] for Wives admit no Plurality, when they be conſtrued with one Husband; becauſe, as the Prophet ſaith, though God, at the firſt, *had abundance of Spirit, yet he made but one* [Mal. ii.]

but

but one Woman of one Rib, for the Help and Comfort of one Man.

Secondly, of all the Goods which Men poſſeſs, only a Ship cannot be houſed; a Man hath a Shop for his Wares, a Barn for his Corn, a Cheſt for his Money, and a Houſe wherein to hide his Head, but no Caſe to cover a Ship; but ſo muſt not a virtuous Woman be; for it is a Note of the unchaſte Woman, that *her Feet cannot abide in her Houſe*; but *now ſhe is without, now in the Street, and lies in wait at every Corner* [Prov. vii. 11. 12.] So as whoſo ſeeth her, ſeeth her always gadding, that he may ſalute her, as Men ſalute at Sea, Whither are ye bound? But *Rachel* and *Leah* are noted to be in the Houſe, while *Jacob* was abroad in the Field [*Gen.* xxxi.] Only *Dinah* was a Stragler, and ſet up Sail to *Shechem*; but ſhe came home with Shame, and made an ill Voyage.

Thirdly, a Ship, of all things, is moveable, and carried with the Wind; but ſo muſt not a good Woman be; for of the ill Woman it is ſaid [*Prov.* v.] *Her Paths are moveable, thou canſt not know them.* She is inconſtant, light-headed, and vain; now ſhe loves, anon ſhe hates; now ſhe obeys, anon ſhe rebels; gentle and kind to-day, crooked and unkind to-morrow; for ſhe ſails but by Guſts, that all her Goodneſs takes her by Fits, like the good Days of an Ague: And whereas *Ruth* ſhewed more Goodneſs at her Latter End than at her Beginning [*Ruth* iii.] an ill Wife ſheweth more Goodneſs in one Day of her Beginning, than in ſeven Years of her Latter End; therefore ſuch muſt remember what *Solomon* ſaith of the good Woman here, *ſhe girdeth her Loins with Strength*; that is, her Mind with Stayedneſs and Conſtancy [Ver. 17. and Ver. 12.] more plainly, *She will do her Husband good and not evil all the Days of her Life*; that is, ſhe is as obedient and tractable after Twenty Years Tryal, as at the Day of her Marriage.

But, of all Qualities, a Woman muſt not have one Quality of a Ship; and that is, too much Rigging. O what a Wonder is it to ſee a Ship under Sail, with her Tacklings,

Tacklings, and her Maſts, and her Tops and Top-Gallants; with her Upper-Decks, and her Nether-Decks, and ſo bedeck'd with her Streamers, Flags, and Enſigns, and I know not what! yea, but a World of Wonders is it to ſee a Woman, created in God's Image, ſo miſ-create, oft-times, and deformed with her *French*, her *Spaniſh*, and her fooliſh Faſhions, that he that made her, when he looks upon her, ſhall hardly know her! with her Plumes, her Fans, and a Silken Vizard; with a Ruff like a Sail, yea a Ruff like a Rainbow; with a Feather in her Cap, like a Flag in her Top, to tell, I think, which way the Wind will blow. *Iſaiah* made a Proffer in the third of his Prophecy, to ſet out, by Enumeration, the Shop of theſe Vanities, their Bonnets and their Bracelets, and their Tablets, their Slippers and their Mufflers, their Veils, their Wimples, and their Criſping-Pins; of ſome whereof, if one ſhould ſay to me, as *Philip* ſometime ſaid to the Eunuch, *Underſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt?* [Acts. viii.] I might anſwer with the Eunuch again, *How can I without a Guide?* That is, unleſs ſome Gentlewoman would comment on the Text. But *Iſaiah* was then, and we are now; now that Fancy hath multiplied the Text of Faſhions with the Time, ſo as what was then but a Shop, is now encreaſed to a Ship of Vanities. But what ſaith the Scriptures? *The King's Daughter is all glorious within* [Pſal xlv.] And as Ships which are the faireſt in Shew, yet are not always the fitteſt for Uſe; ſo neither are Women the more to be eſteemed, but the more to be ſuſpected, for their fair Trappings. Yet we condemn not in greater Perſonages the Uſe of Ornaments; yea, we teach that Silver, Silks, and Gold, were created not only for the Neceſſity, but alſo for the Ornament of the Saints: In the Practice whereof, *Rebeccah*, a holy Woman, is noted to have received from *Iſaac*, a holy Man, even Ear-rings, Habiliments, and Bracelets of Gold [*Gen.* xxiv.] therefore this it is we teach for Rules of Chriſtian Sobriety, That if a Woman exceed neither Decency in Faſhion, nor the Limits of her State and Degree, and that ſhe be proud of nothing, we ſee no Reaſon but ſhe may wear any thing.

It followeth, *she is like a Ship*; but what Ship? A Ship of Merchants: No doubt, a great Commendation; *for the Kingdom of Heaven is like a Merchant* [Mat. xiii.] and Merchants have been Princes [*Isa.* xxiii.] and Princes are Gods [*Psal.* lxxxii.] The Merchant is of all Men most laborious for his Life, and most adventurous in his Labour, the most peaceable upon the Sea, the most profitable to the Land; yea, the Merchant is the Combination and Union of Lands and Countries. She is like a Ship of Merchants; therefore first to be reckoned, as ye see, among the Laity; not like a Fisher-man's Boat, not like St. *Peter's* Ship; for Christ did call no She-Apostles. Indeed it is commendable in a Woman, when she is able by her Wisdom, to instruct her Children, and to give, at Opportunities, good Counsel to her Husband; but when Women shall take upon them, as some have done, to build Churches, and to chalk out Discipline for the Church, this is neither commendable nor tolerable; for her Hands, saith *Solomon*, *must handle the Spindle* [Ver. 19.] the Spindle, or the Cradle, but neither the Altar, nor the Temple: For St. *John* commendeth, even to the Elect Lady, not so much her Talking, as her Walking in the Commandments [2 *John* 5, 6.] therefore to such preaching Women it may be answered, as St. *Bernard* sometime answered the Image of the Blessed Virgin, at the great Church at *Spire* in *Germany*: *Bernard* was no sooner come into the Church, but the Image strait saluted him, and bade him *Good Morrow*, Bernard. Whereat *Bernard*, well knowing the Juggling of the Friars, made Answer again, out of St. *Paul*, O! saith he, *your Ladyship hath forgot yourself, it is not lawful for a Woman to speak in the Church.*

Again, the Merchant is a profitable Ship, to teach a Wife in all things to endeavour her Husband's Profit: But many Women are like Water-Pageants, made only for Shew; like Pictures in a Table, good for nothing but to please the Eye; no longer to be liked than they be looked on; yea, so unprofitable and dissolute in the House, as no Man would think them to be Wives; but that at Meals he finds them sitting at the Upper End of the

the Table: Whereas of the good Wife it is ſaid, *ſhe will do her Husband Good and not Evil* [Ver. 12.]

Again, the Merchant is a painful Ship, and ſhe muſt be a painful Wife; not like a running Pinnace, to ſcour from Coaſt to Coaſt, from Houſe to Houſe, as many *Athenian* Women do, who give themſelves to nothing but idly and wantonly to hear and tell News; for he that hath ſuch a Wife, may think himſelf married to an Intelligencer; whereas St. *Paul* adviſeth ſuch Buſie-bodies to govern their own Houſes [1 *Tim.* v.] as if intermeddling with other Mens, did make them idle in their own.

Again, being like a Merchant's Ship, that is, he being the Merchant, and ſhe the Ship, ſhe muſt needs conclude, ſhe was made for him; and therefore a Ship of Traffick to inrich him, but not a Pirate to ſpoil and rob him. To ſpoil and rob? As if a Woman could rob her Husband? Indeed it hath often been held a Queſtion diſputable, though I indeed have little Mind to diſpute it, yet I hear what is ſaid to that Purpoſe from the Mouth of *Eve*: *We eat of the Fruit of the Trees of the Garden* [Gen. iii.] *We*, therefore ſhe puts in her ſelf, and ſhe eats of the Trees indefinitely; therefore of all the Trees in the Garden; and therefore all was hers as well as *Adam*'s, and the Woman's in Right as well as the Man's. To which I anſwer, That all is hers in Participation to uſe, but *Adam*'s only in Diſcretion to diſpoſe; which appeareth by two Reaſons: Firſt, becauſe the Beaſts were named by *Adam*, and not by *Eve*; and to name is a Note of Dominion and Authority; as when *Joſeph* became *Pharaoh*'s Servant, *Daniel* a Captive to the *Caldeans*, they received from them other Names; and we in our Baptiſm receive our Names, to acknowledge that we belong in Right to Chriſt. Secondly, the whole World was given to *Adam* before *Eve* was made; ſo as hers was but an After-Right: And if ſhe hath any Tenure at all, ſhe holds *in Capite*; and ſhe hath no Title but by her Husband. She therefore that uſurpeth abſolute Authority in the Houſe, is no Merchant, but a Pirate to the Merchant.

Laſtly, ſhe is like a Merchant's Ship; that is, a friendly Fellow and a peaceable Companion to him, but not a Man

Man of War to contend with him: For he that made her never built her for Battle ſure; ſhe was built for Peace, and not for War, for Merchants weep to think of War; therefore ſhe muſt not, for every angry Word of her Husband, betake herſelf into the Gun-room ſtrait, and there to thunder, to charge and diſcharge upon him, with broad Words, or, as Mariners ſay at Sea, to turn the Broad-ſide, like *Zipporah*, the Wife of *Moſes*; to rail upon him, *Thou art indeed a bloody Husband* [Exod. iv.] This is no Ship of Merchants, this is the Spite, I think; and therefore no marvel if many Men, thus ſhipt, do wiſh themſelves a-ſhore, and that untimely Death might take ſuch a Wife for a Prize. When *Eliezer* went a wooing for *Iſaac*, his Maſter's Son, the Tryal by which he propoſed to prove a fit Wife for *Iſaac*, was this, *That if*, ſaith he, when *I ſay to a Maid, Give me drink, ſhe ſay again, Drink, and I will give thy Camels alſo;* ſhe, without more ado, ſhould be a Wife for *Iſaac* [Gen. xxiv.] That is, as *Theodoret* expoundeth it, if ſhe were gentle; not like that Woman [*John*. iv.] *Chriſt* asked her Water, and ſhe called him *Jew: How is it that thou a* Jew *askeſt Water of me a* Samaritan? For though there be many Sins incident to Women (as there be, to ſpeak impartially, as many to Men) yet no Vice in a Woman is ſo unwomanly as this; yet if *Adam* had been furious, the matter had been leſs, for he was made of Earth, the Mother of Iron and Steel, the murthering Metals; but the Woman ſhe was made of ſo tender Metal to become ſo terrible, the weaker Veſſel ſo ſtrong in Paſſion; yea, to look ſo fair, and ſpeak ſo foul, what a Contrariety is this? There was great Reaſon ſure to compare a good Woman to a Snail, not only for her Silence and continual keeping of her Houſe, but alſo for a certain commendable Timerouſneſs of her Nature, which, at the leaſt Shaking of the Air, ſhrinks back into her Shell; and ſo ought the Wife to do, if her Husband but ſpeak, to play all-hide and under Hatches, and to put out a Flag of Truce, as *Abigal* did to *David*; and to ſay to her Husband, as *Rachel* to her Father, *Let not my Lord be angry* [Gen. xxxi.] *Like a Lily among Thorns*

Thorns (ſaith *Solomon*) *ſo is my Love among the Daughters* [Cant. ii.] Like a Lily: Firſt, not like a Nettle: Again, like a Lily among Thorns, as ſhewing Patience in the foreſt Provocation. *Sarah* indeed was peaceable, and ſo were many more, yet their Praiſe was leſs, in as much as they had meek Husbands; for ſhe is a Monſter that liveth not meekly with a meek Husband: But ſhe that is yoak'd with a *Nabal*, a Churl, a Fool, as *Abigal* was, and bears that patiently, ſhe may ſay, with *Deborah* [in the fifth of *Judges*] *O my Soul, thou haſt marched valiantly!* And there ſhall more true Honour grow to you by ſuch Patience, than if, Soldier-like, ye did prevail by Fury and Violence; and the worſe your Husbands be, the more ſhall your Virtue ſhine, which in Affliction ſhineth moſt, like Stars twinkling in the Night; and if it be grievous to find Matter of Patience, there where ye look'd for Comfort and Protection, yet it ſhall have, in the End, a Reward, and in the Interim a ſingular Admiration; and, as *Mary* ſaith of her ſelf, *All Generations ſhall call* ſuch *bleſſed.*

It followeth in the Text, *ſhe bringeth her Food from afar*: As ye have heard what ſhe is like, ſo now likewiſe what ſhe doth; for being is known by doing, as the Tree is known by the Fruit. Alas! it is a ſmall thing, yea, it is nothing to be like; for Copper oft-times is like good Coin, and the Devil is like an Angel of Light; and if evil Women were not like to many things which indeed they are not, they could not deceive ſo many as they do: Therefore the next thing is, to conſider what ſhe doth; *ſhe bringeth her Food from afar.* She bringeth: Firſt, therefore deſcribed *facie adverſa, non averſa;* with her Face, not with her Back toward; for when a Ship goeth forth, every Man murmureth for that it carrieth; the Merchant himſelf feareth, leſt it miſcarry; but when it returneth, there is Joy for that it bringeth. And where *Solomon* ſaith, *ſhe bringeth*, he meaneth not That ſhe bringeth in with her, as if a Wife were to be choſen by her Dowry; for the worſt Wives have many times the beſt Portions, and the beſt Wives (ſuch as *Eſther* was) have oft-times none at all. Indeed

the Manner of the World is now, to ſeek Wives as *Judas* betrayed Chriſt, with a *Quantum dabis?* What will you give? and if the Father chance to ſay with *Peter*, *Aurum & Argentum non eſt mihi*, I have neither Gold nor Silver; let her then be as obedient as *Sarah*, as devout as *Anna*, as virtuous as the Virgin *Mary*, yet all this is nothing. *Quærenda pecunia primum eſt.* Other things may mend it, but Money makes the Match. Therefore this was not it which *Solomon* means by bringing: For a good Wife, tho' ſhe bring nothing in with her, yet, thro' her Wiſdom and Diligence, great things come in by her; ſhe brings in with her Hands, for, *ſhe putteth her Hands to the Wheel*, ſaith *Solomon*, [Ver. 19.] and indeed if her Work do not countervail her Meat, then is every Finger of her Hand like a Thief in the Houſe. Again, if ſhe be too high to ſtain her Hands with bodily Labour, yet ſhe bringeth in with her Eye, for, *ſhe overſeeth the Ways of her Houſhold*, ſaith *Solomon*, and eateth not the Bread of *Idleneſs* [Ver. 27.] Again, ſhe bringeth in by her Frugality, for ſhe holdeth it a Point of Conſcience, neither to fare more daintily, nor to attire her ſelf more trimly, than may ſtand with her Husband's State: For if ſhe waſte more than ſhe bring in, and her Victualling amount to more than her whole Voyage, that Merchant was ill-adviſed that mann'd her forth, and it had been good for him to have been alone. But, as the Saying is, That many Men marry their Executors, ſo it is true likewiſe, that many Men marry their Executioners: And as the Sin of *Adam* began at *Eve*, ſo the Ruin and Confuſion, the Extortion, Oppreſſion, Griping of Tenants, yea and Sacrilege of many Men, beginneth at the Pride of the Woman; for now every Lady of the lateſt Edition, if her Husband have bribed out but an End of an Office, yet ſhe revels and plays *Rex*, and ſhe muſt have her Coach, tho' but to croſs from the Church-Stile to the Church-Porch: And whereas thoſe *Iſraelitiſh* Women, [*Exod.* xxxviii.] when the Inſtruments of the Tabernacle were to be made, gave, in their Devotion, their very Looking-glaſſes towards it; yet now the forbidden Apple is pulled, the Church is robbed and ſpoiled; a Patron will

ſcarce

ſcarce paſs away a poor Parſonage, but with a Reſervation of his own Tithes; and all to maintain *French* Hoods, Lawns, and Looking-glaſſes: Whereas of the virtuous Wife, it is ſaid [Ver. 11.] *That her Husband ſhall have no need of ſpoil.*

But what bringeth ſhe in? *She brings in Food.* In which Word *Solomon* pointeth her out a Houſe-work, as ſhe is a Houſe-wife, and the Work aſſigned is, the Feeding of the Houſhold; for we read that *Abraham* fetched a Calf from the Field, but *Sarah* had her Charge to dreſs it in the Tent [*Gen.* xviii.] And *Samuel* telleth the People, that their King (when they had him) would take not their Sons, but their Daughters, and make them Cooks and Bakers [1 *Sam.* xviii.] and in the fifteenth Verſe of this Chapter, it is ſaid directly, that, *ſhe giveth the Portion to her Houſhold, and the Ordinary to her Maids.* But that which we read Food, ſome tranſlate it Bread; ſhe bringeth her Bread, and it may well be, for Bread is the Staff of Life, and when, like Merchants, we have run round about the World, to fetch in the Riches of every Country, yet all is but to cloath the Back and feed the Belly: Therefore, *having Food and Raiment*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *let us therewith be content* [1 Tim. vi.]

Again, as he is not the beſt Merchant to the Commonwealth, which bringeth in Toys and Trifles; but he which bringeth in ſuch things as beſt may ſerve Neceſſity; ſo neither is ſhe always the beſt Wife which is moſt adorned with Tricks and Qualities, but ſhe that endeavoureth moſt to that which is moſt neceſſary. And I think ſurely that Bread is expreſly named here, as to frame her whole Converſation, ſo chiefly her Mouth, with Sobriety: For many Women are in the mind of the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, Manna is no Meat for them, but they muſt have Quails, and all muſt be dainty, tho' to the undoing of all, like *Eve*, the Wife of *Adam*, whom, of all the Trees in *Paradiſe*, none might ſerve, but that which was the Bane of her Husband; and the leſs they want, the more wanton and dainty-mouthed they be. Now, ſure, if *Cyrus* had had ſuch a Wife, he muſt needs have worſhipp'd her; for he had no other

Reaſon to worſhip the Idol *Bell*, but only becauſe it ſpent him ſo many Sheep, ſo many Meaſures of Flower, and ſo many Pots of Wine every Day; but every Meat was not made for every Mouth, only Bread was made for all; and neither Man nor Woman have Warrant to ask for more than for their daily Bread.

But what meaneth *Solomon* by that *from afar?* Sure not to anſwer what is proverbially ſaid, that far fetch'd and dear bought is fitteſt for Ladies; as now-a-days what groweth at home is baſe and homely; and what every one eats is Meat for Dogs, and we muſt have Bread from one Country, and Drink from another; and we muſt have Meat from *Spain*, and Sauce out of *Italy*; and if we wear any thing, it muſt be pure *Venetian*, *Roman*, or *Barbarian;* but the Faſhion of all muſt be *French*. And as *Seneca* ſaith, in another Caſe, *Victi victoribus Leges dederunt*, we give them the Foil, and yet they muſt give us the Faſhion. Therefore this was not *Solomon*'s Meaning; but *from afar* either hath reſpect to the Time, *A longinquo tempore*, as it ſeemeth to be expounded in the very next Words, *ſhe riſeth while it is yet Night, and giveth the Portion to her Houſhold*, &c. He doth not ſay, ſhe meeteth it at the Door, as ſhe that riſeth to Dinner, and then thinks her Day's Work half done; and for every Fit of an idle Fever betakes her ſtraight to her Cabin again; and if her Finger but ake, ſhe muſt have one ſtand by to feed her with a Spoon. This is no Ship of Merchants, this is the *Mary-ſlug;* but *ſhe bringeth it from afar;* that is, ſhe taketh Care of it, and diſpoſeth of it from the firſt, yea, and before the firſt Hand that toucheth it.

Or elſe I take this *from afar* to be farther yet, even *ab ultimis Naturæ*; from the firſt and fartheſt Principles of Nature. As for Example, if ſhe will have Bread, ſhe muſt not always buy it, but ſhe muſt ſow it, and reap it, and grind it, and, as *Sarah* did [Gen. xviii.] *ſhe muſt knead it, and make it into Bread.* Or if ſhe will have Cloth, ſhe muſt not always run to the Shop, or to the Score, but ſhe begins at the Seed, ſhe carrieth her Seed to the Ground, from off the Ground ſhe gathereth Flax,

of

of her Flax ſhe ſpinneth a Thread, of her Thread ſhe weaveth Cloth, and ſo ſhe comes by her Coat; the very Words of *Solomon* [Ver. 13.] *ſhe ſeeketh Wool and Flax, and laboureth carefully with her Hands.*

Or elſe I take this *from afar* to be farther yet, even from the Gates of Heaven; from whence, by her Devotion and godly Converſation, ſhe draweth down the Bleſſings of God upon her Houſe. The barren *Rachel* pray'd, and ſo did *Anna* too, and by their Prayers obtained Children of the Lord. Now, ſure, if the Prayers of a virtuous Woman were ſo powerful, as, againſt the Courſe of Nature, to derive and fetch Children from a barren Womb, how much more ſhall it command the meaner Bleſſings on the Houſe? And therefore, as a wicked Woman is a Sea of Evils, ſo a virtuous Woman is a Heaven of Beauty, and there is none ſo fair as ſhe that feareth God: Nay, what ſpeak we of Beauty? *For Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is Vanity* [Ver. 30. of the Chapter] and as the Painting of a Ship by Weather and by Water is waſh'd away, ſo ſhall all Carnal Beauty by Sorrow, Age and Sickneſs, even wither and waſte into Wrinkles; but *ſhe that feareth the Lord* (ſaith *Solomon*) *ſhe ſhall be praiſed.* Praiſed? Yea, honoured and admired; the Stars in the Night, the Sun at Noon-day ſhall not ſhine ſo bright as ſhe: For he that goes by her Door ſhall point at her, and he that dwells by her ſhall envy him that hath her; and every Man ſhall ſay, bleſſed be he that made her, happy is he that begat her, renowned is ſhe that bare her, but moſt happy, renowned, and rich is he that hath her: And as even now, ſo I ſay again, *All Generations ſhall call ſuch bleſſed.*

Application to the King.

Well, to make uſe of this in ſeveral Kinds, I moſt humbly beſeech your Majeſty, firſt to admit of a particular Application to your ſelf: It is ſaid [*Mat.* xii.] That the Queen of the *South* came to hear the Wiſdom of *Solomon*; but we may ſay, converſively and truly, that the Wiſdom of *Solomon* is come to the King of the

North: For your Majeſty is to us indeed a Royal Merchant, not only for the Union of Holy Marriage, which yokes and couples one Sex with another, but as Merchants do by Intercourſe of Traffick, for knitting and combining one Kingdom with another. And I will not ſay it is kingly, but divine and heavenly, to unite into one things of divided Nature: For thus did God create the World; firſt he made things, and then he match'd them; firſt he created, and then he coupled them; of Man and Woman he made one in Marriage, of Body and Soul he made one Man, of Sea and Land he made one Earth, of Heaven and Earth he made one World; but then came the Devil upon the Stage, and his Part was, again to divide what God had united; firſt Man from God, then Man from Man, and that diverſly; firſt in the very Bond of Blood and Kindred, *Cain* from *Abel*, the Brother from the Brother; then diſtinguiſh'd, by Religions, the Sons of God and the Daughters of Men, then diſperſed, by their ſeveral Habitations, the Iſles of the *Gentiles*, and the Tents of *Shem*; and then diſtracted and torn into divers Kingdoms, the Kingdom of *Judah*, and the Kingdom of *Iſrael:* Therefore, doubtleſs, a glorious Work it were, of *Judah* and *Iſrael* again to make one Kingdom: For if it be ſo gracious in God's Eyes to do Right and Juſtice to a Stranger, how much more to love a Stranger; but moſt of all to take away the Name of a Stranger? The King of Kings be Pilate of your Ship, yea, thrice bleſſed and happy be your Majeſty's Endeavours therein.

Application to Ladies and Gentlewomen.

Ladies and Gentlewomen, I beſeech you miſtake me not, and impute no Partiality to me. If I have ſaid any thing ſharply, yet know that I have ſaid nothing againſt the good, but all againſt evil Women; yea, nothing againſt the Sex, but all againſt the Sins of Women. To which, if any reply, And why not, I pray, againſt the Sins of Men? I anſwer, That he that impoſeth ſo much upon the Weaker Veſſel, importeth much more to the Stronger.

Stronger. There is a Duty required of the Parents to the Child, as well as the Child to the Parents; yet the Law ſpeaketh expreſly to the Child, *Honour thy Father and Mother*, but nothing to the Parents, that they being, in Order of Nature and in Wiſdom, ſuperior, might ſuſpect their Duty to be written in themſelves.

Application to the Married.

Again, Right Honourable in both Sexes; the Cauſe of this Meeting, the Joy of this Day, yea, the Myſtery and little Image of this great intended Union, let me be bold, I beſeech you, in Terms of Modeſty to make Application to you. You are met here to be match'd, that is, to be married; and Marriage (as the Apoſtle ſaith) is honourable in all, but thrice honourable in you. Firſt, honourable in the Inſtitution, as in all other. Secondly, in your Perſonages, being honourable above other. But Thirdly, in your Countries, the moſt honourable of all other. For ſimply to marry, joins Sex and Sex, to marry at home joins Houſe and Houſe, but your Marriage joineth Land and Land, Earth and Earth; only Chriſt goes beyond it, who joins Heaven and Earth.

Application to the Bridegroom.

Therefore, firſt to you the Honourable Merchant of this Honourable Ship, you have heard what is ſaid, that Marriage is a ſore Adventure, and therefore, as Mariners upon the Sea in the Day-time look up to the Sun, and in the Night to the Pole-Star; ſo look you up Day and Night to God, and God ſhall give you good Shipping therein. A married Man, they ſay, hath the Charge of three Common-wealths; for he is a Huſband of a Wife, a Father of Children, and a Maſter of Servants; and he hath daily need of God, who ſhould guide all theſe. Therefore, firſt love God, and, to prove that Love, love alſo her whom God hath given you; for, if (as St. *John* ſaith) *He that loveth not his Brother*, &c. how much more he that loveth not his Wife, whom he daily ſeeth,

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how ſhall he love God, whom he never ſaw? And indeed there is no Religion or Goodneſs in that Man that loveth not a faithful and loyal Wife. And ſay not you love, unleſs you love to the End; for *much Water cannot quench Love* [Cant. viii.] for *Love endureth all things, believeth all things, and ſuffereth all things.* Therefore, if there grow by the Wife any Cauſe of Grief, yet you muſt remember, ſhe is the weaker Veſſel; God therein exerciſeth your Wiſdom in reforming, and your Patience in bearing it; and with whom will a Man bear, if not with his own Wife? If at any time you have Occaſion to exerciſe your Authority, yet you muſt remember, it is Authority tempered with Equality; the Wife is therefore to be governed with Love, not over-ruled by Tyranny; and let all Huſbands know this for a Rule in all things, That the Wife ſhall much better do her Duty to her Huſband, when the Husband doth his own Duty in Example before.

Application to the Bride.

And let me ſpeak one Word to you this Honourable Ship; you are turned by God's Providence into the Right of Merchant Stranger, yet herein happy, that you need not, as *Pharaoh*'s Daughter, to forget either your own People, or your Father's Houſe. All the Time of your Life you have been gathering for this Day; therefore learn to practiſe now that you learned before; that is, to honour, to love, and to obey, and then at laſt you ſhall come to rule: For a good Wife, by obeying her Huſband, rules him; but ſhe that obeyeth not, is like the Conſpiracy of *Corah* againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*. Beſides, remember your Badge is not of that Ship [*Acts* xxviii.] not *Caſtor* and *Pollux*, for I find neither Superſtition or Idolatry in any Part of your Family; but I find, among other things, a Sheaf of Wheat, and a Handful of Wheat advanced upon your Stern, therefore doubtleſs it will be expected, that Plenty, Peace, and Proſperity come in with you. I might refer you for Patterns of true Virtue, as St. *Paul* ſometimes referred *Timothy*, to *Lois* and *Eunica*, a Grandmother and a Mother; and indeed this Chapter of *Solomon*

is

is intitled, *The Prophecy or Leſſon which his Mother taught him:* And if you remember the many *good Leſſons* your Mother hath taught you, then ſhall I need to ſay no more, then ſhall you be like *Rachel* and *Leah*, which twain did build up the Houſe of *Iſrael:* Then ſhall you be a Ship indeed, for you ſhall bring your ſelf and your Huſband to the Haven, even to that which Sea-men call *Promontorium Bonæ Spei*, the Hill or Haven of Good Hope, that is, to Heaven; and when this Marriage is diſſolved, you ſhall marry at laſt with the Lamb. In the mean time, do worthily in *Ephratah*, and be famous in *Britain*, live to a Hundred, grow into Thouſands, and your Seed poſſeſs the Gate of his Enemy.

THE

THE BRIDAL BUSH:

A SERMON Preached to a New-Married Couple, at ÆASEN in NORFOLK.

To the Vertuous Lady, Madam Cornwallis, *of* Winkfield, *in* Suffolk, *Widow of* John Cornwallis, *Esq;*

SISTER,

YOU were ſeveral Years Wife to my Brother, and I never heard you were reconcil'd to him all the while you lived with him, yet were you I believe as loving a Pair as any in the Country: I can eaſily ſolve the Riddle; you loved him ſo well, that you never gave him an Occaſion to *fall out* with you; and where there is no *falling out*, there needs no *Reconciliation*.

May all Wives write after your Copy; and may the Great God, the Author of *Marriage*, reward your *Temporal Love* to your Huſband upon Earth, with his Eternal Joys in Heaven, is the Prayer of,

H. C.

The PREFACE to the READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

WHoever thou art, into whoſe Hands this little Book ſhall fall, I beſeech you do not read it with Levity of Mind, or Vanity of Thoughts; nor think of it a light, jocular Thing, but believe it a Matter of Duty, and

and the Neglect of it a great Sin; for they that think the Duties of this Relation to be no great Concernment, muſt needs be ſo impious as to impute Trifling to the Holy Spirit of God, which hath ſo frequently, and with ſo much Earneſtneſs, recommended it to us. In moſt of the Epiſtles, the Apoſtles do preſs the Duties betwixt Husband and Wife upon us; and certainly what was worthy their Care to write and teach, is worth our Care to learn and practiſe.

EPHES. v. 33.

Nevertheleſs, let every one of you in particular ſo love his Wife as himſelf; and let the Wife ſee that ſhe reverence her Husband.

I HAVE already, in ſeveral Sermons, given you Directions how to ſerve God Almighty as a private Perſon. This Sermon will teach you how to ſerve God as a Maſter of a Family: Now there are three Relations in a Family, *viz.* Huſband and Wife, Parent and Child, Maſter and Servant; in each of theſe it is our Duty to make Religion our Buſineſs, and to exerciſe our ſelves unto Godlineſs.

I ſhall begin firſt with the Duty betwixt Huſband and Wife, and ſhall proceed in this Method:

Firſt, I ſhall ſhew you what are the mutual Duties between them.

Secondly, I ſhall proceed then to thoſe that are peculiar to each other.

Thirdly, Give you Directions for the Performance of them.

Now they owe to each other ſeveral Duties; Mutual Love, Mutual Fidelity, and laſtly, Mutual Patience.

1. Mutual Love; this is the conjugal Grace, the great Reaſon and Comfort of Marriage; they are one in many Bonds; one Name, one Bed, one Houſe, and it behoves them then to be one both in Heart and Mind: The Love betwixt

betwixt Chriſt and his Church, which is ſo fervent, that ſhe is ſaid to be ſick of Love for him, and he died out of Love to her; all this is ſet forth by the Love betwixt Huſband and Wife, to ſhew unto us how great this Love is, or at leaſt ought to be; the very Heathens were ſo ſenſible of this Duty, that, in their Wedding Sacrifices to *Juno* (the Author of Marriage, in their Eſteem) they took the Gall out of the Beaſt, and threw it away; to ſhew unto us, that all Bitterneſs muſt be laid aſide in that Relation. Our Saviour Chriſt calls his Spouſe, the Church, his Dove (which is a Bird without Gall, and ſo the Emblem of Love). And when 'tis ſaid, *Let a Man leave Father and Mother, and cleave to his Wife*; the Original ſignifies glewing; now Love is the only Glew and Cement of reaſonable Spirits.

Secondly, Mutual Fidelity; and this to ſhew it ſelf to Body, Goods, or Good Name.

1. For the Body: This is plainly expreſſed [1 *Cor.* vii. 4.] None have Power over Man's Body but the Wife; and none over the Woman but the Man; to require it for themſelves, and to deny all others: This mutual Intereſt in one anothers Bodies, and Fidelity to the ſame, ſeems to be taught us by the Birds of the Air; the Doves keep to their Mate, but the Storks are moſt famous for their Faithfulneſs; for it is credibly reported, by ſome that have ſeen it, That whole Flocks of Storks meet in a Meadow, where they have ſet two of their Company, that have been found to be diſloyal, and running upon them, with their Beaks have killed them, all the reſt flying away, have left the two Offenders dead in the Place. Theſe Fowls of the Air will one Day riſe up in Judgment againſt thoſe Beaſts of the Earth, who forſake the Covenant of their God, and make their Bodies; which ought to be the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, the Stews of Satan.

2. Mutual Fidelity to Goods. It is very ſad when Man and Wife unite together, as Beams of the Sun in a Burning-glaſs, prodigally to conſume and waſte what their induſtrious Parents frugally gathered for them; they are a pitiful Pair that are ſuch together; but 'tis like a Pair of Cards, rather to play than work: *Solomon* ſends ſuch

ſuch Perſons to School to the Ant, a Creature of little Body, but no Soul, yet this poor Inſect may teach Huſband and Wife this Duty, to gather ſomething for their Families.

3. Good Name: Now this Duty is performed by Proclaimances, and making known their Virtues, and by concealing their Infirmities; for there cannot be a more unnatural Treachery, than when the Huſband and Wife, the neareſt of Friends, conſpire to make one another odious and obnoxious; bad, when done by Inadvertency, worſe when in Paſſion, but worſt of all when it is done thro' Deliberation, Malice and Revenge.

Thirdly, Mutual Patience: This Grace we are bound to exerciſe towards all Men; how much more to ſuch near and dear Relations? Innumerable are the Occaſions which miniſter Contention, and whereof Satan makes no ſmall Advantage.

Hiſtory makes mention of a Pagan entering the Houſe of a Chriſtian Neighbour, and finding the Husband and Wife at odds, banning and curſing each other, could not be perſuaded to ſtay and ſit down, but ran out of the Houſe, as one affrighted, ſaying, *God cannot be in the Place where there is ſo much Contention among ſo near Relations.*

The married ought therefore to ſtudy and pray for a meek and quiet Spirit; mortify Pride, learn Self-denial, and ſome time wiſely withdraw till the Storm be over: They muſt conſider, as Mr. *Bolton* ſaith, *That Two Angels are not met together, but Two ſinful Children of Adam*, from whom little is expected, but Weakneſs and Wearineſs: They ought to ſtudy each other's Tempers, and beware of being both angry together: When the one is paſſionate, the other ought to be patient; *for Men* (ſaith the ingenious *Fuller*) *are contrary to Iron Bars, to be wrought upon when hot, but more tractable in cold Blood.*

Monica, St. *Auſtin*'s Mother, being asked, by an Heathen Neighbour, how ſhe could pleaſe ſuch a cholerick Huſband, anſwered gravely, *The Chriſtian Religion teaches me to be moſt patient when my Husband is paſſio-*

 nate,

nate, and by this means his Heart is not only gained to me, but in ſome meaſure to Chriſt.

Thus much for the Mutual: I now proceed to the Special, and ſhall begin firſt with that of an Husband.

And he ſolemnly promiſes, before God, the Holy Angels, and Men, theſe Three Duties; to love, to cheriſh, and keep.

Firſt, To love: This Duty is frequently mentioned in Holy Writ, as if it were the only Duty enjoined. Now how great this Love to the Wife ought to be, is ſet forth to us by Two Compariſons.

1. Of Chriſt's Love to his Church, which was ſo great that he died for it.

2. Of our ſelves; *Nevertheleſs*, ſays my Text, *let a Man Love his Wife as himſelf:* Now Self-love has theſe Properties.

1. 'Tis cordial, without any Diſſimulation; many feign Love and Friendſhip to others, but no Man is unſincere and falſe to himſelf; the ſame Love ought he to ſhew to his Wife.

2. 'Tis conſtant; 'tis ſo natural, that nothing can make it ceaſe; tho' a Man hath been handſome, and, by Sickneſs, is become deformed, yet ſtill he loves himſelf; no Accident can change, nor Defect leſſen a Man's Love to himſelf, neither ought it to abuſe his Affections to his Wife.

3. Tender; how tenderly doth a Man treat himſelf; ſuch ought a Man's Affection to be to his Wife, expreſſing of it by a tender Regard of her, both in Sickneſs and in Health: Beſides this Argument, the Formation of the Woman out of a Man ſhews how great his Affection ſhould be to her; ſhe was not made of his Head, to be his Sovereign, nor yet of his Feet, to be his Slave; but of a Rib in his Side, to ſhew how near ſhe ſhould lie to his Heart.

Thus much for the firſt Duty; I proceed now to the ſecond.

Secondly, To cheriſh: And we find this Duty commanded us in 1 *Pet.* iii. 7. *Husbands, deal with your Wives according to Knowledge, defraud not one another, except*

except by Conſent, and come together again, that Satan tempt you not: Which plainly ſhews this mutual Cohabitation, both at Bed and Board, is ſuch a Debt, that it ought not to be intermitted, and that not long, but for a time.

We read, in the Old Law, when a Man had taken a new Wife, he was not to go to War, neither be charged with any Buſineſs; but he was to be free at home one Year, to chear up the Wife that he had taken [*Deut.* xxiv. 5.] But why, I pray, was he to be exempted the firſt Year? why was there a Law made ſo much in favour of new-married Perſons? they might be as fit for the Service of *Mars* as *Venus*; but he was to ſtay at home one Year, to chear up the Wife that he had taken, that their Affections, as well as Bodies, might be greatly joined together; that nothing but Death could part them: So that neither Deſire of Gain, nor Fear of Trouble, nor occaſional Diſtruſt, nor Pretence of Religion, ſhould ſeparate thoſe from conjugal Converſation, and Cohabitation, whom God hath joined together.

Thirdly, To keep: Now this Duty is ſhewn by providing ſuch Conveniency for her, while you live, as is ſuitable to her Relation to thee, and the Quality and Figure thou beareſt in the World; and, if it ſhould pleaſe God that thou dieſt before her, thou muſt, by no means, beat while thou art dead, by making no Proviſion for her; forcing her, thro' thy Churliſhneſs, to hang on the Cradle, *viz.* depend on her Children for Maintenance, which is a miſerable Condition.

Thus much for the Man's Duty; and from his I ſhall now proceed to the Woman's Duty, *&c.*

And ſhe alſo promiſes three Duties; to love, honour, and obey.

Firſt, To love: But of this I have taught you in the Man's Part, out of which the Woman may learn her Duty, *viz.* to love her Husband as well as ſhe loves her ſelf, and then ſhe will perform this Duty.

Secondly, To honour: And they not only promiſe this Duty at Church, but read it at home in their Bibles; nay, in my very Text, *Let the Wife ſee that ſhe reverence*

her Husband; nay, God Almighty hath not only enjoined this Duty, but hath ſeverely puniſhed the Deſpiſers of it; let *Michal*, the Daughter of *Saul*, be an Inſtance; for we read [2 *Sam.* vi. 16.] how that ſhe deſpiſed her Huſband *David* in her Heart; and what, I pray you, was the Effect of this her Contempt? Why that ſame Chapter tells you, that God puniſh'd her for it with Barrenneſs: *Therefore*, ſaith the Text, Michal, Saul's *Daughter, had no Child to the Day of her Death*. So that ſhe might read her Sin in her Puniſhment. *David* was contemptible in her Eye, and God made her ſo in the Eyes of others; for in thoſe Days Barrenneſs was a great Curſe. Barren *Michal* is long ſince dead, yet hath ſhe many Daughters now alive: Let them beware of her Sin of deſpiſing their Husbands, if they would avoid her Puniſhment of Barrenneſs.

Thirdly, Obedience: It is obſerved in the Scripture, when it mentions the Duty of Husband and Wife, the Woman is put firſt, as in *Eph.* v. *Col.* iii. 1 *Pet.* iii. A learned Writer gives this Reaſon for it; becauſe the Love of an Husband depends much upon the Obedience of a Wife. Women cannot rationally expect Love, where they are unwilling to obey. I believe this Word ſounds harſh in ſome Women's Ears, when they are at their Homes; but it is certainly their Duty, not only by Promiſe at the Church, but by an original Puniſhment for the firſt Woman's Tranſgreſſion; and we cannot think God, with whom there is no Shadow of Change, ſhould alter it, nor the Husband part with it, unleſs his Head be ſofter than his Heart.

APPLICATION.

But now, to draw to a Concluſion, Chriſtian Reader, whoever thou art into whoſe Hands this little Book ſhall come, if God hath called thee to this Relation, I beſeech thee to walk worthy of it, and behave thy ſelf as one married to Chriſt; for God did not inſtitute Marriage to be an Hinderance, but an Help to Godlineſs. It is ſaid of *Enoch* [*Gen.* v. 22.] that he walked with God, and begat Sons and Daughters; he walked with God, even when he

he walked with a Wife; ſhe was an Help to him in the Way to Heaven: Thus Women are called Helpers, and *Priſcilla*, the Wife, is put before *Aquila*, the Huſband, in ſeveral Places, as the forwarder of the two in Piety [*Rom.* xvi. *Acts* xviii. 2 *Tim.* iv.] For Shame, therefore, do not thou, as ſoon as married, give a Bill of Divorce to Religion; like the Man in the Goſpel, who, being invited to the ſpiritual Feaſt of Chriſt's Supper, gave the worſt Anſwer of all the Gueſts, ſaying, *I have married a Wife, and I cannot come;* the reſt were mannerly, and deſired to be excuſed, but he was peremptory impudent, becauſe he might not only have come himſelf, but have brought his Wife with him; but now, to move you to walk with God in this Eſtate, give me leave to give you two Motives, as taken out of the Works of the ingenious Mr. *Swinock*.

1. Conſider the Frailty of a married Life; if that State would always laſt, thou mighteſt have ſome Colour for minding nothing but thy carnal Liberty in it: But conſider, Death will untie the ſacred Knot, and this Relation will die with thee, that Hand which diſſolveth the Union betwixt Man and Wife; and what a ſad Farewel will that Couple have, at Death, when they ſhall conſider with themſelves, that have lived ſo long together, meerly to eat, drink, bed, and bring up Children together; but never minded (at leaſt in good earneſt) the Fear and Favour of the ever bleſſed God. The *Jews* have a Cuſtom, at this Day, when a Couple are married, to break the Glaſs in which the Bride and Bridegroom have drank, to admoniſh them to Mortality.

Reader, art thou an Husband? Conſider, within a few Days God Almighty may take away the Deſire of thine Eyes with a Stroke: Thy Voice ere long will not be, *Where is my Wife*, or, call your Mother, or Miſtreſs, to Children or Servants; *But alas! ſhe is dead; where ſhall I get a Burying-place to bury my Wife out of my Sight?* And then, if thou reflect on thy Carriage towards her, and Converſation with her, how thou didſt live together without God; often wrangling, but ſeldom or never praying together! ſurely, thou may'ſt have cauſe

to cry out of thy Wife (as *Crutiſclea* of her Child, *rea, quò rueris? Alas! poor Wife, where art thou houſed, in Heaven or Hell? I know not.*

Art thou a Wife? The next time thou lookeſt on thy loving Husband, conſider with thy ſelf, this dearly beloved Husband of mine, in whoſe Company I have had ſuch Content and Comfort, muſt, ere long, be ſeparated from me; thoſe ruddy Lips, which have ſo often kiſſed me, will look pale; and that Countenance, which hath ſo often ſmiled on me, will be wan and ghaſtly; thoſe Arms, which have ſo often embraced me, will hang down, and the whole Body be Food for Worms, and crumble to Duſt; and ſhall we mind nothing but Pleaſure, and live like Brutes together, as if there were no Life after this? Seeing then your Life is ſo frail, be mindful of your Deaths, that you may be faithful in your Duties.

2. Conſider the Covenant that you entered into with each other, before God, the Holy Angels and Men, and let it be like the Covenant of the *Jews*, never to be forgotten; 'tis dangerous to break Covenant with Man, but much worſe with God. Now the Marriage Covenant is called God's Covenant [*Prov.* ii. 17.] *Firſt*, Becauſe God is the Author of it. *Secondly*, Becauſe he is averſe to it. *Thirdly*, Becauſe he is the Avenger of it; and can we expect to break it, and eſcape unpuniſh'd? No, we read, in the Scripture, that he hath ſeverely chaſtiſed thoſe that have broke Covenant with Man, and can we think he will acquit thoſe that break Covenant with himſelf?

I ſhall now ſum up the whole with theſe brief Directions.

1. Pray to God Almighty to direct thee in thy Choice; if thou wouldſt live happy in this Eſtate, Marriage is of great Concern, both to thy temporal and eternal Intereſt, and ought not to be enterprized without great Deliberation, and Prayer to God for a Bleſſing on what you undertake.

2. Let not Wealth or Beauty be the Foundation of thy Choice; you that marry meerly for Beauty, buy a Picture; they that join themſelves together meerly for Wealth, buye

buye a Purchaſe: If theſe be the Foundation of your Choice, when Poverty and Sickneſs comes upon us, our Love will preſently ceaſe; but let Virtue and ſolid Piety in the Perſon, and a conſcientious Reſpect to God's Ordinance, be the Motives, and your Love will be laſting: One Article of the Marriage Vow is, to keep one another in Sickneſs and in Health; but how can you do that, if Beauty be the Ground of Affection and Duty? which Sickneſs ruins and deſtroys.

3. Keep your ſelves chaſte in that Single State. Marriage I compare to Salt, if the Fleſh be good, it does preſerve it; but when once tainted, all the Salt in the World will not recover it. So he that defiles his Body with Women before Marriage will find it no eaſy matter to keep himſelf chaſte after it.

Laſtly, Pray with, and one for another; thus St. *Peter* adviſes the married Perſons to ſuch loving Converſation, that your Prayers be not hindered [1 *Pet.* iii. 7.] Signifying how indiſpenſible a Duty it is, to pray for, and with one another; thus we read [*Gen.* xxv. 21.] that *Iſaac* and *Rebecca* pray'd and multiplied together, to ſhew the Prevalency of ſuch united Prayers and Addreſſes to God; 'tis the pureſt Love that is teſtified by mutual Prayer, and ſpiritual Converſation; for the married owe one another a ſpiritual, as well as a matrimonial Affection; and if they only eat and drink, and lodge together, what do they more than others? Do not the Publicans and Sinners the ſame? If Love reſpects only the outward Man, it reſembles that of Children to Babies, when they kiſs and dandle them: But you love one anothers Souls, you love as Chriſtians; that is, as Chriſt loved you.

I ſhall conclude my Sermon with this Prayer, which I adviſe all married Perſons to uſe in their Cloſets.

O Almighty God, who haſt conſecrated the Holy State of Matrimony to ſuch an excellent Miniſtry, that in it is repreſented the ſpiritual Marriage and Unity between Chriſt and his Church: Look graciouſly upon us, thy Servants, me and my Wife; and grant that I may love her according to thy Word, and my Vow and Promiſe

Promiſe at thy Houſe; and that ſhe may be loving and amiable, faithful and obedient to me; and in all Quietneſs, Sobriety and Peace, a Follower of holy and godly Matrons; that ſo we (performing and keeping the Vow and Promiſe betwixt us made) may ever remain in perfect Love and Peace together here, and enter into thy eternal Glory hereafter. Look, O Lord, mercifully upon us, from Heaven, and bleſs us as thou didſt Abraham *and* Sarah, *to their great Comfort; ſo vouchſafe to ſend thy Bleſſing upon us, that we, obeying thy Will, and always being in Safety under thy Protection, may abide in thy Love to our Lives End.*

Furthermore, we moſt humbly beſeech thee, O moſt merciful Father, by whoſe gracious Gift Mankind is increaſed, that thou wouldſt be pleaſed (if thou think ſo fit) to aſſiſt us with thy Bleſſing, that we may be both faithful in Procreation of Children, and alſo live together in godly Love and Honeſty, that we may ſee our Children virtuouſly brought up, to thy Praiſe and Honour, thro' our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

This laſt Clauſe is to he left out, if the woman be paſt Child-bearing.

A

WEDDING RING

Fit for the FINGER:

OR,

The Salve of Divinity on the Sore of Humanity.

Laid open in a moſt Delightful and Inſtructive SERMON Preach'd at a Wedding in *Edmonton*.

CHRISTIAN READER,

IT is not good weighing one's own Worth in ſuch unequal Balances, where the Feather of Opinion turns the Scales. One Spoke can never ſtand ſtill, whilſt the whole Wheel goes round. The Gifts and Graces of Chriſtians lay in common, till Envy made the firſt Incloſure. Here thou mayeſt ſhew thy Wiſdom, in ſpinning a fine Thread out of coarſe Wooll. Do not hurt him by thy Malice, who would help thee in thy Marriage. Who would plant a Piece of Ordinance to beat down an Aſpen Leaf, which, having always the Palſy, will fall alone? This Piece neither deſires Supplanters, nor deſerves Supporters. It comes forth, as a preſs'd Soldier, not as a Voluntier; what it was in Preaching, it is in Publiſhing. There is not one Cubit added to its Stature, to ſecure it from the Avenger of Blood. It flies to thy City of Refuge. Let him who ſows his Pains, reap thy Prayers.

Thine in the Lord Jeſus,

W. SECKER.

GEN. ii. 18.

And the Lord God ſaid, It is not good that the Man ſhould be alone: I will make him a Help meet for him.

HUMAN Miſery is, to divine Mercy, as a black Foil to a ſparkling Diamond, or as a ſable Cloud to the Sun-beams. Pſal. viii. 4. *Lord, what is Man, that thou art mindful of him!* Man is,

In his Creation, Angelical.
In his Corruption, Diabolical.
In his Renovation, Theological.
In his Tranſlation, Majeſtical.

An Angel in *Eden*	A Saint in the Church.
A Devil in the World.	A King in Heaven.

There were Four Silver Channels in which the chryſtal Streams of God's Affection ran to Man in his Creation.

I. In his Preparation.	III. In his Coronation.
II. In his Aſſimulation.	IV. In his Aſſociation.

I. In his *Preparation*. Other Creatures received the Charter of their Beings by a ſimple *Fiat*; but there was a Conſultation at his Forming, not for the Difficulty, but for the Dignity of the Work. The Painter is moſt ſtudious about that which he means to make his Maſter-piece. The four Elements were taken out of their Elements, to make up the Perfection of Man's Complection. The Fire was purified, the Air was clarified, the Water was purged, the Earth was refined: When Man was moulded, Heaven and Earth was married; a Body from the one was eſpouſed to a Soul from the other.

II. In his *Aſſimulation*. Other Creatures were made like themſelves, but Man was made like God, as the Wax hath the Impreſſion of the Seal upon it. It is admirable to behold ſo fair a Picture in ſuch coarſe Canvaſs, and ſo bright a Character in ſo brown Paper.

III. In his *Coronation*. He that made Man and all the reſt, made Man over all the reſt; *quantillum Dominum!*

poſuit

poſuit Deus in tantum Dominium? He was a little Lord of a great Lordſhip. This King was Crowned in his Cradle.

IV. In his *Aſſociation.* Society is the Solace of Humanity. The World would be a Deſart without a Conſort.

Moſt of Mens Parts are made in Pairs; now he that was double in his Perfection muſt not be ſingle in his Condition, *And the Lord God ſaid*, &c.

Theſe Words are like the Iron Gate that opened to *Peter* of its own accord, dividing themſelves into three Parts.

1. An Introduction, *And the Lord God ſaid.*
2. An Aſſertion, *It is not good that Man ſhould be alone.*
3. A Determination, *I will make an Help meet for him.*

In the firſt there's a Majeſty propoſed.
In the ſecond there's a Malady preſented.
In the third there's a Remedy provided.
Once more let me put theſe Grapes into the Preſs.

1. The Sovereignneſs of the Expreſſion; *And the Lord God ſaid.*
2. The Solitarineſs of the Condition, *It is not good*, &c.
3. The Suitableneſs of the Proviſion, *I will make*, &c.

In the firſt there's the Worth of *Veracity.*
In the ſecond there's the Want of *Society.*
In the third there's the Work of *Divinity.*
Of theſe in their Order. And firſt of the *Firſt.*

Firſt, the Sovereignneſs of the Expreſſion, *And the Lord God ſaid.*

Luke. i. 70. *As he ſpake by the Mouth of his Prophets.* In other Scriptures he uſed their Mouths, but in this he makes uſe of his own: They were the Organs, and he the Breath; they the early Streams, and he the Fountain. How he ſpake, 'tis hard to be ſpoken; whether eternally, or internally, or externally. *Quomodo, non eſt quod quæramus, ſed potiùs, quid dixerit intelligamus.* We are not to enquire into the Manner of ſpeaking, but the Matter that's ſpoken; which leads me, like a directing Star,

ſtar, from the Suburbs to the City, from the Porch to the Palace, from the Founder of the Mine, to the Treaſure that's in it, *It is not good*, &c. In which you have two things.

1. The Subject. 2. The Predicate.

The Subject, *Man alone.*

The Predicate, *It is not good*, &c.

Firſt, the Subject, *Man alone*. Take this in two Branches.

1. As it is limited to one Man.

2. As it is lengthened to all Men.

Firſt, as it is limited to one Man, and ſo it is taken particularly, Man for the firſt Man. When all other Creatures had their Mates, *Adam* wanted his: Tho' he was the Emperor of the Earth, and the Admiral of the Seas, yet in Paradiſe without a Companion. Tho' he was truly happy, yet he was not fully happy: Tho' he had enough for his Board, yet he had not enough for his Bed: Tho' he had many Creatures to ſerve him, yet he wanted a Creature to ſolace him: When he was compounded in Creation, he muſt be compleated by Conjunction: When he had no Sin to hurt him, then he muſt have a Wife to help him; *It is not good that Man ſhould be alone.*

Secondly, as it's lengthened to all Men, and ſo it's taken univerſally [*Heb.* xiii. 4.] *Marriage is honourable unto all*, not only νόμιμος, but τίμιος. It's not only warrantable, but honourable. The whole Trinity hath conſpired together to ſet a Crown of Glory upon Matrimony.

1. *God the Father:* Marriage was a Tree planted within the Walls of Paradiſe; this Flower firſt grew in God's Garden.

2. *The Son:* Marriage is a Chryſtal Glaſs wherein Chriſt and his Saints do ſee each others Faces.

3. *The Holy Ghoſt*, by his overſhadowing of the Bleſſed Virgin. Well might the World, when it ſaw her Pregnancy, ſuſpect her Virginity; but her matrimonial Condition was a Grave to that Suſpicion; without this, her Innocency had not prevented her Infamy; ſhe needed a Shield to defend that Chaſtity abroad, which was kept inviolably at home.

Too

Too many that have not Worth enough to preſerve their Virginity, have yet Will enough to cover their Unchaſtity; turning the Medicine of Frailty into the Mantle of Filthineſs. Certainly ſhe is mad that cuts off her Leg to get a Crutch, or that venoms her Face to wear a Mask.

St. *Paul* makes it one of the Characters of thoſe that ſhould caſhier the Faith [1 *Tim.* iv. 3.] Not to forbear Marriage, which may be lawful, but to forbid it, which is ſinful.

One of the Popes of *Rome* ſprinkles this unholy Drop upon it, *Carnis pollutionem & immunditiem.*

It's ſtrange *That* ſhould be a Pollution, which was inſtituted before Corruption; or *That* Impurity, which was ordained in the State of Innocency, or that they ſhould make that to be a Sin which they make to be a Sacrament.

But a Baſtard may be laid at the Door of Chaſtity; and a leaden Crown ſet upon a golden Head.

Bellarmine, that mighty *Atlas* of the Papal Power, blows his ſtinking Breath upon it, ſaying, *Better were it for a Prieſt to defile himſelf with many Harlots, than to be married to one Wife.* Theſe Children of the purple Whore prefer their Monaſteries before our Marriages; a Concubine before a Companion. They uſe too many for their Luſts, to chuſe any for their Love. Their Tables are ſo largely ſpred, that they can't feed upon one Diſh.

As for their exalting a Virgin-ſtate, it's like him that commended Faſting, when he had fill'd his Belly.

Who knows not, that Virginity is a Pearl of ſparkling Luſtre? But cannot the one be ſet up, without the other be thrown down? Will no Oblation pacify the former, but the demoliſhing of the latter? Tho' we find many Enemies to the Choice of Marriage, yet it's very rare to find any Enemies to the Uſe of Marriage. They would pick the Lock, that want the Key; and pluck the Fruit, that do not plant the Tree.

The *Hebrews* have a Saying, *He is not a Man, that hath not a Woman.*

Tho' they climb too high a Bough; yet it's to be feared that ſuch Fleſh is full of Imperfection, that is not

tending to Propagation. Tho' Man alone may be good, yet *it is not good that Man ſhould be alone*; which leads me from the Subject to the Predicate, *It is not good*, &c.

Non bonum is not in this Place as *malum*; but *bonum eſt honeſtum, utile, jucundum.*

Now it is not good that a Man ſhould be in a ſingle Condition, upon a threefold Conſideration.

1. In reſpect of Sin, which would not elſe be prevented. Marriage is like Water, to quench the Sparks of Luſt's Fire [1 *Cor.* vii. 2.] *Nevertheleſs, to avoid Fornication, let every one have his own Wife*, &c. Man needed no ſuch Phyſick when he was in perfect Health. Temptations will break Nature's beſt Fence, and lay its Paradiſe waſte, but a ſingle Life is a Priſon of unruly Deſires, which is daily attempted to be broke open.

Some indeed force themſelves to a ſingle Life, merely to avoid the Charges of a Married State; they had rather fry in the Greaſe of their own Senſuality, than extinguiſh thoſe Flames with an allowed Remedy. *It is better to marry than to burn*; to be lawfully coupled, than to be luſtfully ſcorch'd. It's beſt feeding theſe Flames with ordinate Fewel.

2. Tis not good in reſpect of Mankind, which then would not be propagated. The *Roman* Hiſtorian relating the Raviſhing of the *Sabine* Women, excuſed it thus; *Res erat unius ætatis populus virorum:* Without them Mankind would fall from the Earth, and periſh. Marriages do turn Mutability into the Image of Eternity: It ſprings up new Buds, when the old are withered. It's a greater Honour for a Man to be the Father of one Son, than to be the Maſter of many Servants. Without a Wife, Children cannot be had lawfully; without a good Wife Children cannot be had comfortably. Man and Woman, as the Stock and the Scien, being grafted by Marriage, are Trees bearing Fruit to the World.

St. *Auguſtin* ſays, this Pair is, *Primum par & fundamentum omnium*, &c. They are the firſt Link of human Society, to which all the reſt are joined. Mankind had long ago decayed and been like a Taper fallen into the Socket,

Socket, if thoſe Breaches, which are made by Mortality, were not repaired by Matrimony.

3. 'Tis not good in regard of the Church, which could not then have been expatiated. Where there is no Generation, there can be no Regeneration: Nature makes us Creatures, before Grace makes us Chriſtians. If the Loins of Men had been leſs fruitful, the Death of Chriſt had been leſs ſucceſsful.

It was a witty Queſtion that one put to him that ſaid, *Marriage fills the Earth, but Virginity fills the Heavens.* How can the Heavens be full, if the Earth be empty?

Had *Adam* lived in Innocency without Matrimony, there would have been no Servants of God in the Church Militant, nor no Saints with God in the Church Triumphant. But I will not ſink this Veſſel, by the over-burdening of it, nor preſs this Truth to Death by laying too great a Load upon its Shoulders.

There is one Knot which I muſt untie before I make a further Progreſs [1 *Cor.* vii. 1.] *It is good for a Man not to touch a Woman.*

Do all the Scriptures proceed out of the ſame Mouth, and do they not all ſpeak the ſame Truth? The God of Unity will not indite Diſcord, and the God of Verity cannot aſſert Falſhood. If Good and Evil be Contraries, how contrary then are theſe Scriptures? Either *Moſes* miſtakes God, or *Paul* miſtakes *Moſes* about the Point of Marriage.

To which I ſhall give a double Anſwer.

1. There is a publick and a private Good. In reſpect of one Man, it may be good not to touch a Woman, but in reſpect of all, *So it is not good that the Man ſhould be alone.*

2. *Moſes* ſpeaks of the State of Man created; *Paul* of the State of Man corrupted: Now that which by Inſtitution was a Mercy, may, by Corruption, become a Miſery; as pure Water is tainted by running thro' a miry Channel; or as the Sun-beams receive a Tincture by ſhining thro' a coloured Glaſs. There's no Print of Evil in the World, but Sin is the Stamp that made it. They that ſeek nothing but Weal in its Commiſſion, will find

nothing but Woe in the Concluſion: Which leads me from the Solitarineſs of the Condition, *Man alone*, to the Suitableneſs of the Proviſion, *I will make an Help meet for him.*

In which you have two Parts,

1. The Agent, *I will make.*
2. The Object, *a Help.*

Firſt, The Agent, *I will make.*

We cannot build a Houſe without Tools, but the Trinity is at Liberty; *Dic verbum tantum.*

To God's Omniſcience there is nothing inviſible, and to God's Omnipotency there is nothing impoſſible.

We work by Hands without, but he works without Hands. He that made Man meet for Help, makes a meet Help for Man.

Marriages are conſented above, but conſummated below [*Prov.* xviii. 22.] Tho' Man wants Supply, yet he cannot ſupply his Wants [*James* i. 17.] *Every good and perfect Gift comes from above*, &c. A Wife, tho' ſhe be not a perfect Gift, yet ſhe is a good Gift. Thoſe Beams are darted from the Sun of Righteouſneſs.

Haſt thou a ſoft Heart? It's of God's breaking: Haſt thou a ſweet Wife? She's of God's making.

Let me draw up this Expreſſion with a double Application.

1. When thou layeſt out for ſuch a Good on Earth, look up to the God of Heaven. Let him make thy Choice for thee, who hath made his Choice of thee. Look above you, before you look about you. Nothing makes up the Happineſs of a married Condition, like the Holineſs of a mortified Diſpoſition. Account not thoſe the moſt worthy, that are the moſt wealthy. Art thou matched to the Lord? Match in the Lord. How happy are ſuch Marriages, where Chriſt is at the Wedding! Let none but thoſe who have found Favour in God's Eyes, find Favour in yours.

2. Give God the Tribute of your Gratulation for your good Companions. Take heed of paying your Rent to a wrong Landlord. When you taſte of the Stream, reflect on the Spring that feeds it. Now thou haſt Four

Eyes

Eyes for thy Speculation, Four Hands for thy Operation, Four Feet for thy Ambulation, and Four Shoulders for thy Suſtentation. What the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is in Point of Divinity, that is Unthankfulneſs in Point of Morality; an Offence unpardonable. Pity it is but that Moon ſhould be ever in Eclipſe, that will not acknowledge her Beams to be borrowed from the Sun. He that praiſes not the Giver, prizes not the Gift; and ſo I paſs from the Agent to the Object, *A Help*.

She muſt be ſo much, and no leſs, and ſo much, and no more. Our Ribs were not ordained to be our Rulers. They are not made of the Head, to claim Superiority. They deſert the Author of Nature, that invert the Order of Nature. The Woman was made for the Man's Comfort, but the Man was not made for the Woman's Command. Thoſe Shoulders aſpire too high, that content not themſelves with a Room below their Head. It's between a Man and his Wife in the Houſe, as it is between the Sun and Moon in the Heavens; when the greater Light goes down, the leſſer Light gets up; when the one ends in ſetting, the other begins in ſhining. The Wife may be a Sovereign in the Huſband's Abſence, but ſhe muſt be a Subject in her Huſband's Preſence. As *Pharaoh* ſaid to *Joſeph*, ſo ſhould the Huſband ſay to the Wife [*Gen.* xli. 40.] *Thou ſhalt be over my Houſe, and according to thy Word ſhall all my People be ruled, only in the Throne will I be greater than thou*. The Body of that Houſhold can never make a good Motion, whoſe Bones are out of Place. The Woman muſt be a Help to the Man in theſe Four Things.

1. To his *Piety*.
2. To his *Society*.
3. To his *Progeny*.
4. To his *Proſperity*.

To his *Piety*, by the Ferventneſs of her Excitation. To his *Society*, by the Fragrantneſs of her Converſation. To his *Progeny*, by the Fruitfulneſs of her Education. To his *Proſperity*, by the Faithfulneſs of her Preſervation.

1. To his *Piety*, by the Ferventneſs of her Excitation [1 *Pet.* iii. 7.] Huſband and Wife ſhould be as the two Milch-Kine, which were coupled together to carry the Ark of God; or, as the two Cherubims that looked one

upon another, and both upon the Mercy Seat; or, as the two Tables of Stone, on each of which were engraven the Laws of God. In ſome Families, married Perſons are like *Jeremiah*'s two Baskets of Figs, one very good, the other very evil; or, like Fire and Water, whilſt the one is flaming in Devotion, the other is freezing in Corruption. There is a twofold Hinderance of Holineſs; firſt, on the right Side; ſecondly, on the left. On the right Side, when the Wife would run God's Way, the Huſband will not let her go. When the Fore-horſe in a Team will not draw, he wrongs all the reſt. When the General of an Army forbids a March, all the Soldiers ſtand ſtill. Sometimes on the left: How did *Solomon*'s idolatrous Wife draw away his Heart from Heaven? A ſinning Wife was *Satan*'s firſt Ladder, by which he ſcaled the Walls of Paradiſe, and took away the Fort-Royal of *Adam*'s Heart from him. Thus, ſhe that ſhould have been the Help of his Fleſh, was the Hurt of his Faith: His Nature's Under-propper becomes his Grace's Underminer; and ſhe that ſhould be a Crown on the Head, is a Croſs on the Shoulders. The Wife is often to the Huſband as the Ivy is to the Oak, which draws away his Sap from him.

2. A Help to his *Society*, by the Fragrantneſs of her Converſation. Man is an affectionate Creature. Now the Woman's Behaviour ſhould be ſuch towards the Man, as to requite his Affection, by increaſing his Delectation. That the new-born Love may not be blaſted as ſoon as bloſſomed; that it may not be ruined before it be rooted: A Spouſe ſhould carry herſelf ſo to her Huſband, as not to diſturb his Love by her Contention, nor to deſtroy his Love by her Alienation. Huſband and Wife ſhould be like two Candles burning together, which makes the Houſe more lightſome; or, like two fragrant Flowers bound up in one Noſegay, that augment its Sweetneſs; or, like two well-tun'd Inſtruments, which, ſounding together, makes the more melodious Muſick. Huſband and Wife, what are they, but as two Springs meeting, and joining their Streams, that they make but one Current?

rent? It's an unpleaſing Spectacle, to view any Contention in this Conjunction.

3. To his *Progeny*, by the Fruitfulneſs of her Education, that ſo her Children in the Fleſh may be God's Children in the Spirit [1 *Sam.* i. 11.] *Hannah* ſhe vows, if the Lord will give her a Son by bearing of him, ſhe will return that Son to the Lord by ſerving him. A Spouſe ſhould be more careful of her Childrens breeding, than ſhe ſhould be fearful of her Children bearing. Take heed leſt theſe Flowers grow in the Devil's Garden. Tho' you bring them out in Corruption, yet do not bring them up to Damnation. Thoſe are not Mothers, but Monſters, that, whilſt they ſhould be teaching their Children the Way to Heaven with their Lips, are leading them the Way to Hell with their Lives.

Good Education is the beſt Livery you can give them living, and it's the beſt Legacy you can leave them dying. You let out your Cares to make them great, O lift up your Prayers to make them good, that before you die from them, you may ſee Chriſt live in them.

Whilſt theſe Twigs are green and tender, they ſhould be bowed towards God. Children and Servants are in a Family, as Paſſengers are in a Boat; Husband and Wife, they are as a Pair of Oars to row them to their deſired Haven. Let theſe ſmall Pieces of Timber be hewed and ſquared for the celeſtial Building. By putting a Scepter of Grace into their Hands, you will ſet a Crown of Glory upon their Heads.

4. A Help to his *Proſperity*, by her faithful Preſervation, being not a Wanderer abroad, but a Worker at home. One of the Ancients ſpeaks excellently: She muſt not be a Field-Wife, like *Dinah*; nor a Street-Wife, like *Thamar*; nor a Window-Wife, like *Jezabel*.

Phidias, when he drew a Woman, painted her ſitting under a Snail-ſhell, that ſhe might imitate that little Creature, that goes no farther than it can carry its Houſe upon its Head.

How many Women are there, that are not labouring Bees, but idle Drones; that take up a Room in the Hive, but bring no Honey to it; that are Moths to their Huſ-

bands

bands Eſtates, ſpending what they ſhould be ſparing? As the Man's Part is to provide induſtriouſly, ſo the Woman's is to preſerve diſcreetly: The one muſt not be careleſſly wanting, the other muſt not be cauſleſſly waſting: The Man muſt be ſeeking with Diligence, the Woman muſt be ſaving with Providence. The Cock and and the Hen both ſcrape together in the Duſt-heap, to pick up ſomething for their little Chickens.

To wind up this on a ſhort Bottom.

1. If the Woman be a Help to the Man, then let not the Man caſt Dirt on the Woman.

Secundus being ask'd his Opinion of a Woman, ſpeaks thus: *Viri naufragium, domûs tempeſtas, quietis impedimentum*, &c. But ſurely he was a Monſter and not a Man; fitter for a Tomb to bury him, than a Womb to bear him.

Some have ſtiled them to be

Like Clouds in the Sky.
Like Motes in the Sun.
Like Snuffs in the Candle.
Like Weeds in the Garden.

It is not good to play the Butcher with that naked Sex, that hath no Arms but for Embraces. A Preacher ſhould not be ſilent for thoſe who are ſilenc'd from Preaching: Becauſe they are the weaker Veſſels, ſhall they be broken all to Pieces? Thou that ſayeſt Women are evil, it may be thy Expreſſion flows from thy Experience; but I ſhall never take that Mariner for my Pilot, that hath no better Knowledge, than the ſplitting of his own Ship. Wilt thou condemn the Frame of all, for the Faults of one? As if it were true Logick, becauſe ſome are evil, therefore none are good. He hath ill Eyes that diſdains all Objects. To blaſt thy Helper, is to blame thy Maker. In a Word, we took our Riſe from their Bowels, and may take our Reſt in their Boſoms.

2. Is the Woman to be a Help to the Man, then let the Man be a Help to the Woman. What makes theſe Debtors be ſuch ill Pay-Maſters, but becauſe they look at what is owing to them, but not at what is owing by them? If thou wouldſt have thy Wife's Reverence, let her

her have thy Reſpect. To foree a Fear from this Relation, is that which neither befits the Huſband's Authority to enjoyn, nor the Wife's Duty to perform. A Wife muſt not be ſharply driven, but ſweetly drawn. Compaſſion may bend her, but Compulſion will break her. Huſband and Wife ſhould act towards each other by Conſent, not by Conſtraint.

There are four Things wherein the Huſband is a meet Help to the Wife.

Firſt, In his protecting her from Injuries. It's well obſerv'd by one, that the Rib of which Woman was made, was taken from under the Man's Arm; as the Uſe of the Arm is to keep off Blows from the Body, ſo the Office of a Huſband is, to ward off Blows from the Wife: The Wife is the Huſband's Treaſury, and the Huſband ſhould be the Wife's Armory: In Darkneſs he ſhould be her Sun for Direction; in Danger he ſhould be her Shield for Protection.

Secondly, In his providing for her Neceſſities. The Huſband muſt communicate Maintenance to the Wife, as the Head conveys Influence to the Members; thou muſt not be a Drone, and ſhe a Drudge. A Man in a married Eſtate, is like a Chamberlain in an Inn, there's Knocking for him in every Room. Many Perſons in this Condition waſte that Eſtate in Luxury, which ſhould ſupply their Wives Neceſſities. *Nec amor viget mariti, nec fides Chriſtiani;* they have neither the Faith of a Chriſtian, nor the Love of a Huſband. It's a ſad Spectacle to ſee a Virgin ſold with her own Money into Slavery, when Services are better than Marriages: The one receives Wages, whilſt the other buyes their Fetters.

Thirdly, In his covering of her Infirmities. Who would trample upon a Jewel, becauſe it's fallen in the Dirt? or throw away a Heap of Wheat for a little Chaff? or deſpiſe a Golden Wedge, becauſe there is ſome Droſs? Theſe Roſes have their Prickles. Now Huſbands ſhould ſpread a Mantle of Charity over their Wives Infirmities. They be ill Birds that defile their own Neſts. It's a great deal better you ſhould faſt, than feed yourſelves upon their Failings. Some Huſbands are never well

longer

longer than they are holding their Fingers in their Wives Sores. Such are like Crows, that faſten only upon Carrion. Do not put out the Candle, becauſe of the Snuff. If the Gold be good, allow it *Grains*. Huſbands and Wives ſhould provoke one another to Love, and they ſhould love one another, notwithſtanding of Provocation. Take heed of poiſoning thoſe Springs, from whence the Streams of your Pleaſure flows.

Fourthly, By his delighting in her Society. A Wife takes Sanctuary, not only in her Huſband's Houſe, but in his Heart. The Tree of Love ſhould grow up in the Family, as the Tree of Life grew up in the Garden. They that chuſe their Love, ſhould love their *Choice*. They that marry where they affect not, will affect where they marry not. Two joined together without Love, are but two tied together to make one another miſerable. And ſo I paſs to the laſt Stage of the Text, *A Help meet*.

A Help, there's her Fulneſs; a *meet Help*, there's her Fitneſs.

The Angels were too much above him, the Creatures were too much below him; he could not ſtep up to the former, nor could he ſtoop down to the latter: The one was out of his Reach, the other was out of his Race; but the Woman is a Parallel Line drawn equal with him: Meet ſhe muſt be in three things.

1. The Harmony of her Diſpoſition. Huſband and Wife ſhould be like Images in a Looking-glaſs, that anſwers in all Properties to the Face that ſtands before it; or like an Eccho, that returneth the Voice it receiveth. Many Marriages are like putting new Wine into old Bottles. An old Man is not a meet Help for a young Woman. He that ſets a grey Head upon green Shoulders, hath one Foot in the Grave, and another in the Cradle. Yet how many times do you ſee the Spring of Youth wedded to the Winter of old Age? A young Perſon is not a meet Help for an old Woman; raw Fleſh is but an ill Plaiſter for rotten Bones. He that, in his Non-age, marries another in her Dote-age, his Luſt hath one Wife in Poſſeſſion, but his Love another in Reverſion.

2. In

2. In the Heraldry of her Condition. Some of our *European* Nations are ſo ſtrict in their Junctions, that it's againſt their Laws, for the Commonality to couple with the Gentry.

It was well ſaid by one: *If the Wife be too much above her Husband, ſhe either ruines him by her vaſt Expences, or reviles him with her baſe Reproaches: If ſhe be too much below her Husband, either her former Condition makes her too generous, or her preſent Mutation makes her too imperious.*

Marriages are ſtiled Matches, yet amongſt thoſe many that are married, how few are there that are match'd? Huſbands and Wives are like Locks and Keys, that rather break than open, except the Wards be anſwerable.

3. In the Holineſs of her Religion. If Adultery may ſeparate a Marriage contracted, Idolatry may hinder a Marriage not perfected. Cattle of divers Kinds were not to ingender [1 *Cor.* vi. 14.] *Be not unequally yoaked*, &c. It's dangerous taking her for a Wife, who will not take God for a Huſband. It is not meet that one Fleſh ſhould be of two Spirits. Is there never a Tree thou likeſt in the Garden, but that which bears forbidden Fruit? There are but two Channels in which the remaining Streams ſhall run.

1. To thoſe Men who want Wives, how to chuſe them.

2. To thoſe Women who have Huſbands, how to uſe them.

Firſt, To thoſe Men that want Wives, how to chuſe them.

Marriage is the tying of ſuch a Knot, that nothing but Death can unlooſe. Common Reaſon ſuggeſts ſo much, that we ſhould be long a doing that which can but once be done. Where one Deſign has been gravelled in the Sands of Delay, thouſands have been ſplit upon the Rock of Precipitance. Raſh Adventures yield little Gain. Opportunities are not like Tides, that when one is paſt, another returns; but yet take heed of flying without your Wings; you may breed ſuch Agues in your Bones, that may ſhake you to your Graves.

1. Let

1. Let me preſerve you from a bad Choice.
2. Preſent you with a good one.

1. To preſerve you from a bad Choice. Take that in three things.

1. Chuſe not for Beauty.
2. Chuſe not for Dowry.
3. Chuſe not for Dignity.

He that looks for Beauty, buyes a Picture.

He that loves for Dowry, makes a Purchaſe.

He that leaps for Dignity, matches with a Multitude at once.

The firſt of theſe is too blind to be directed.

The ſecond too baſe to be accepted.

The third too bold to be reſpected.

1. Chuſe not by your Eyes.
2. Chuſe not by your Hands.
3. Chuſe not by your Ears.

Firſt, Chuſe not by your Eyes, looking at the Beauty of the Perſon. Not but that this is lovely in a Woman; but that this is not all for which a Woman ſhould be beloved. He that had the Choice of many Faces, ſtamps this Character upon them all; *Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain.* The Sun is more bright in a clear Sky, than when the Horizon is clouded. But if a Woman's Fleſh hath more of Beauty, than her Spirit hath of Chriſtianity, it's like Poiſon in Sweet-meats, moſt dangerous; [Gen. vi. 2.] *The Sons of God ſaw the Daughters of Men that they were fair*, &c. One would have thought, that they ſhould rather have looked for Grace in the Heart, than for the Beauty in the Face. Take heed of Inning at the faireſt Signs. The Swan hath black Fleſh under her white Feathers.

Secondly, Chuſe not by your Hands, for the Bounty of the Portion.

When *Cato's* Daughter was asked, why ſhe did not marry? ſhe thus replied: *She could not find the Man that lov'd her Perſon above her Portion.* Men love curious Pictures, but they would have them ſet in Golden Frames. Some are ſo degenerate, as to think any to be good enough, who have but Goods enough. Take heed,

for

for ſometimes the *Bag* and *Baggage* go together. The Perſon ſhould be a Figure, and the Portion a Cypher, which added to her, advances the Sum, but alone ſignifies nothing. When *Themiſtocles* was to marry his Daughter, two Suitors courted her together, the one was rich, and a Fool, the other wiſe, but poor; and being demanded which of the two he had rather his Daughter ſhould have, he anſwered, *Mallem virum ſine pecunia*, &c. I had rather ſhe ſhould have a Man without Money, than Money without a Man.

Thirdly, Chuſe not by your Ears, for the Dignity of her Parentage. A good old Stock may nouriſh a fruitleſs Branch. There are many Children who are not the Bleſſings, but the Blemiſhes of their Parents. They are nobly deſcended, but ignobly minded. Such was *Aurelius Antoninus*, of whom it is ſaid, that he injured his Country in nothing, but in being the Father of ſuch a Child. There are many low in their Deſcents, that are high in their Deſerts. Such was the Cobler's Son, who grew to be a famous Captain: When a great Perſon upbraided the Meanneſs of his Original, *My Nobility*, ſaith he, *begins with me, but thy Nobility ends with thee.* Piety is a greater Honour than Parentage. She is the beſt Gentlewoman, that is Heir of her own Deſerts, and not the degenerate Off-ſpring of another's Vertue.

2. To preſent you with a good Choice; in Three Things.

1. Chuſe ſuch a one as will be ſubject to your Dominion. Take heed of yoaking yourſelves with untamed Heifers.

2. Chuſe ſuch a one as may ſympathize with you in your Affliction. Marriage is juſt like a Sea-voyage; he that enters into this Ship, muſt look to meet with Storms and Tempeſts [1 *Cor.* vii. 28.] *They that marry ſhall have Trouble in the Fleſh.* Fleſh and Trouble are married together, whether we marry or no; now a bitter Cup is too much to be drunk by one Mouth. A heavy Burthen is eaſily carried by the Aſſiſtance of other Shoulders. Huſband and Wife ſhould neither be proud Fleſh nor dead Fleſh. You are Fellow-members, therefore

ſhould have a Fellow-feeling. While one ſtands ſafe on the Shore, the other ſhould pity him that is toſt on the Sea. Sympathy in Suffering, is like a dry Houſe in a wet Day.

3. Chuſe ſuch a one as may be ſerviceable to your Salvation. A Man may think he hath a Saint, when he hath a Devil; but take heed of a Harlot, that is falſe to thy Bed, and a Hypocrite, that is falſe to thy God.

Secondly, To thoſe Women that have Huſbands, how to uſe them; in Two Things.

1. Carry your ſelves towards them with Obedience. Let their Power command you, that their Praiſe may commend you. Tho' you may have your Huſbands Hearts, yet you muſt not have their Heads; as you will his Love, ſo you ſhould love his Will. Till the Huſband leaves commanding, the Wife muſt never leave obeying. As his Injunctions muſt be lawful, ſo her Subjection muſt be loyal.

2. With Faithfulneſs. In Creation, God made not one Woman for many Men, nor many Women for one Man: Every Wife ſhould be to her Husband, as *Evah* was to *Adam*, a whole World of Women; and every Husband ſhould be to his Wife, as *Adam* was to *Evah*, a whole World of Men. When a River is divided into many Channels, the main Current ſtarves.

To conclude: Good Servants are a great Bleſſing; good Children a greater Bleſſing; but a good Wife is the greateſt Bleſſing: And ſuch a Help let him ſeek for her that wants one, let him ſigh for her that hath loſt one, let him take Pleaſure in her that enjoys one. *And the Lord God ſaid, it is not good*, &c.

A New-

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NEW-YEAR'S-GIFT.

A SERMON Preached on *New-Year's-Day*, at a Wedding at *Malden* in *Eſſex*. Shewing the Scarcity and Excellency of *Vertuous Women*.

PROV. xxxi. 10.

Who can find a Vertuous Woman? for her Price is far above Rubies.

FROM theſe Words I ſhall obſerve,

First, The Scarcity of Vertuous Women, *for who can find a Vertuous Woman?*

Secondly, I ſhall diſcover what a Vertuous Woman is.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew the Excellency of a Vertuous Woman.

Fourthly, And laſtly, I ſhall end with a ſeaſonable Advice unto all.

I ſhall begin firſt to diſcover the Scarcity of Vertuous Women. It is recorded in Scripture, that *Solomon* had one thouſand Wives and Concubines, and yet we never read that one of them was a Vertuous Woman; inſomuch that *Solomon*, when he was juſt going to conclude his Book of *Proverbs*, breaks out into theſe Words, ſaying, *who can find a Vertuous Woman?* But here may a Queſtion ariſe, which may be thus: If *Solomon* had not one Vertuous Woman among all his Wives and Concubines, how then could he know how to value a Vertuous Woman at ſo high a Rate? for he tells us, that *her Price is far above Rubies*: So then, to anſwer this Que-

ſtion, whether that *Solomon* had one Vertuous Woman or no, it is not eaſy to determine; but if it may be granted, that he had one Vertuous Woman amongſt the Thouſand, which is more than we read he had, yet from this Rule it follows, that it is but one of a Thouſand; and if ſo, *who then can find a Vertuous Woman?* The Sea affords us Fiſh, the Earth affords us Corn and Graſs, the very Rocks, which ſeem to be moſt unſerviceable of all, they afford us Gold and Silver, and Braſs and Tin; but where can we go to be ſure to find a Vertuous Woman: If we go into the City for to ſpy out a Vertuous Woman, we cannot be ſure ſhe is ſuch an one by her Silk Gown, and rich Attire; for a wicked *Jezabel* may have ſuch Cloathing; neither can we know her by her Beauty, for *Solomon* tells us, that *Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain;* as we may ſee in *Proverbs* xxxi. Neither can we know who is a Vertuous Woman by her fair and flattering Speeches; for *Solomon* tells us, in *Prov.* v. 3. of a Woman, that *her Lips did drop as an Honey-Comb, and her Mouth is ſmoother than Oyl;* but yet he tells us, *that her Feet do go down to Death, and her Steps take hold of Hell*; and ſo conſequently ſuch an one cannot be a Vertuous Woman: If we look abroad in the Country for a Vertuous Woman, we be not ſure what Pariſh affords ſuch an one; but if we did, we could not know her by her coarſe and ragged Cloaths, for every one that hath a ragged Outer-garment, is not cloathed with Humility within, and ſo cannot be a Vertuous Woman. We cannot eaſily know, whether a Woman that is ignorant may be taken into this Number; for when *Solomon* deſcribeth the Properties of a Vertuous Woman, he tells us, that *ſhe openeth her Mouth with Wiſdom*, as we may ſee in *Prov.* xxxi. 25. Neither will Idleneſs recommend a Woman to be a Vertuous Woman; for *Solomon*, in ſpeaking of ſuch an one, tells us, *that ſhe layeth her Hands to the Spindle.* Well then, ſince all theſe that I have named are no ſure Signs of Vertue; who then can find a Vertuous Woman?

It is ſuppoſed, that there are more Women in the World than Men; by reaſon that there have been ſo ma-

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ny Men ſlain in Battle: The Number of Women is almoſt innumerable, and yet who can find a Vertuous Woman?

But if from the great Number of Women, there ſhould be taken away all the Women that are Whores, and all the Women that are covetous Worldlings, and all the Women that are proud, we might ſee them walk then but thin in the Streets; but if from this ſmall Number that are left, there ſhould be taken away all the Women that are diſobedient unto their Husbands; and all the Women that run from Houſe to Houſe, to tell a Tale to ſeparate chief Friends; and all the Women that keep an unbridled Tongue in their Mouths; yea, if all the ſilly Women that the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of, in 2 *Tim.* iii. 6. Yea, if all thoſe Women that are led Captive by Teachers that creep into Houſes; if all theſe that I have mention'd ſhould be taken away, we need not the Art of Arithmetick to number them that would be left.

I will not ſay, that thoſe which will be left are like white Crows, and black Swans, but they will be rare Creatures indeed; and they muſt not be accounted Worldlings, if they do not go and viſit one another, for the great Diſtance that they live aſunder may help to excuſe them.

I come now, ſecondly, to ſhew what a Vertuous Woman is; and when I have ſo done, you will have no Reaſon to wonder that I have compriſed them in ſo ſmall a Number.

Solomon tells us, in *Proverbs* xxxi. of four Properties that do accompany a Vertuous Woman; he tells us, in the twelfth Verſe, that ſhe will *do her Husband good and not evil all the Days of her Life;* and in the twentieth Verſe he tells us, *that ſhe ſtretcheth out her Hand to the Poor, yea, ſhe reacheth forth her Hand to the Needy:* And at the twenty fifth Verſe he ſaith, *ſhe openeth her Mouth with Wiſdom;* and in the twenty ſeventh Verſe it is ſaid, *that ſhe eateth not the Bread of Idleneſs*; ſo then it follows, that they that deſpiſe their Husbands; and they that are uncharitable unto the Poor, and they that uſe wicked and unprofitable Diſcourſe, and they that live idle and unprofitable Lives, ſuch as theſe cannot be ſaid to be Vertuous Women.

A Vertuous Woman had rather look into the Word of God, to ſee whether her Life and Converſation was agreeable unto the Word of God, than to look into the Glaſs, to ſee whether her Attire was put on neat enough.

A Vertuous Woman goeth to the Church rather to hear the Word of God, than to ſee who hath gotten the neweſt Faſhion.

A Vertuous Woman had rather be an Hour on her Knees at Prayer, than to be an Hour at the Glaſs in attiring of herſelf.

A Vertuous Woman had rather go to Church on Foot, than ride in a Coach to a Feaſt.

A Vertuous Woman had rather lend unto the Lord, by giving unto the Poor, *than to lay up Treaſure where the Moth and Ruſt do corrupt*: So then theſe being the Properties of a Vertuous Woman; *who* is it *can find a Vertuous Woman? for her Price is far above Rubies.*

I come now to the third thing to be conſidered, which is, the Excellency of a Vertuous Woman; but I ſhall want Time and Space fully to expreſs it; for the wiſe Man tells us, *that her Price is far above Rubies:* All that this World can afford, both Gold and Silver, and precious Jewels, come infinitely ſhort of a Vertuous Woman; and I may ſay of ſuch an one, as *Solomon* ſaith of Wiſdom, *that ſhe is better than Rubies, and all the things that may be deſired are not to compare to her.*

There are other things that are valued at a high rate, becauſe of the Scarcity of them; but a Vertuous Woman is valued ſo high, becauſe of her Excellency; but that which is both ſcarce and excellent too, who can expreſs the Value of it! and what is there that is more ſcarce and excellent than Vertuous Women?

Gold and Silver may pay Soldiers, and procure Inſtruments of War, but the Prayer of a Vertuous Woman may be more inſtrumental to procure Safety; for when *Haman* had promiſed to pay ten thouſand Talents of Silver, to the Intent that the *Jews* might be deſtroyed, Queen *Eſther* did not raiſe an Army of the *Jews* to go and fight for their Lives; but ſhe exhorted the People to faſt and pray; and, ſaid ſhe, *I alſo and my Maidens will faſt likewiſe:* And this was ſo acceptable in the Sight of God,

God, that he turned their Mourning into Laughter, and he that desired the Death of others, was hanged himself; as we may see in the Book of *Esther*.

From which we may observe,

That it is not for want of Instruments of War, and an Army to use them, that we cannot put our Enemies to silence; but it is to be feared that we want such as *Esther* was, to make Supplication unto the Lord; and have too many such as the Daughters of *Zion*, who, by their Pride and Haughtiness have provoked God to Anger, which we have great Reason to think (that if they do not cast off the Garments of Pride, and put on Humility) that God will deal with them as he tells us he would with the Daughters of *Zion*, which are spoken off in *Isaiah* iii. For, saith the Lord there, *I will take away the Bravery of their Ornaments, and it shall come to pass, that, instead of sweet Smell, there shall be Stink; thy Men shall fall by the Sword, and thy mighty in the War; rise up ye Women that are at ease, hear my Voice, ye careless Daughters, give Ear unto my Speech* [Isa. xxxii. 9.] Remember! you that can have a fine soft Coach to carry you to feast, and to recreate your selves, if you are not Vertuous Women, you shall be carried by the Devil, at last, and thrown down headlong into the Pit of Destruction, and then what will all your earthly Pleasure avail you? A wicked Woman, in this Life, may have a Coach and Horses to wait upon her, but this cannot defend her from Danger, for the roaring Lion, that seeketh whom he may devour, can overtake her for all this. Now she that is a Vertuous Woman shall have the Angel of the Lord to guard and defend her, and the Devil, with all his Rage and Malice, cannot do such an one any Hurt or Violence; for, saith the *Psalmist*, in *Psal.* cxix. 165. *Great Peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them; for he shall give his Angels charge over them, to keep them;* as we may see in *Psal.* xci.

I come now unto the fourth and last thing to be considered, which is this.

Whatsoever I have spoken concerning the Scarcity of Vertuous Women, it is not to degrade the Female Sex, but

but it is what the Words invited me to, that I inſiſted upon; but if I had taken in all Mankind, both Men and Women, I muſt have concluded, if I had taken the Scripture for my Rule, that the Number of them that lead godly and vertuous Lives are but few, in Compariſon of them that walk on in their crooked and perverſe Ways; for we read in *Gen.* xviii. that there was not Ten righteous Perſons in *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; and our Saviour tells us in *Mat.* vii. 14. *Strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* So then, to conclude, let us all, both Men and Women, remember, that there is nothing can ſtand us in ſtead, at the Hour of Death, and in the Day of Judgment, but a vertuous and a well-ſpent Life.

The USE. Are there but few that live godly and vertuous Lives, and are all the reſt going down to Hell and Deſtruction? Oh then, let us conſider in time what our Life and Converſation is! Oh remember the fooliſh Virgins, that came for Mercy too late! If, at the Hour of Death you be found without the Wedding Garment that God in Holy Scripture doth require, which is a godly and vertuous Life, you ſhall be taken and *bound Hand and Foot, and caſt into utter Darkneſs, where there ſhall be Weeping and Wailing, and Gnaſhing of Teeth:* Every one almoſt is willing to die the Death of the Righteous, and wiſh their Laſt End may be like his; but all theſe Wiſhes will be in vain without a vertuous Life; for, ſays the Apoſtle in *Galatians* vi. 7. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatſoever a Man ſoweth, that ſhall be reap.*

I ſhall conclude with theſe Words of our Saviour, in *Mat.* xiii. *As therefore the Tares are gathered and burnt in the Fire, ſo ſhall it be in the End of this World; the Son of Man ſhall ſend forth his Angels, and they ſhall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do Iniquity, and ſhall caſt them into a Furnace of Fire, there ſhall be wailing and gnaſhing of Teeth; then ſhall the Righteous ſhine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father: Who hath Ears to hear, let him hear.*

THE

THE CHARACTER

Of a CHASTE and *Vertuous* WOMAN.

In a Learned and Pious Diſcourſe againſt *Adultery*.

MATTH. v. 28.

But I ſay unto you, That whoſoever looketh on a Woman to luſt after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart.

E find by many Paſſages in this and the following Chapters, that our Saviour had much to do to free the Law of God from thoſe perverſe Gloſſes and Interpretations which the Ignorance or Malice of Men, aſſiſted by the Ruſt and Corruption of Time and Age, had faſtened to us; it being proper to the Nature of Man, rather handſomely to deceive it ſelf, than willingly to go againſt a viſible Light; to frame the Law to its own Deſires, when it finds it hard to conform them to the Law, and ſecretly, and by little and little, to change the Senſe, tho' openly it retain the Letter.

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In this State of Things our Saviour now found the *Jewiſh* Church, wherein partly the Subtilty of their Doctors and Rabbies, partly the Tradition of their Lawyers, and Practice and Cuſtom of their Courts had perverted the Law of God, underſtanding that looſely which was ſtrictly delivered, and judging of that carnally which was ſpiritually intended: Our Saviour, therefore, that he might fully comply with his prophetical Office, takes upon him to reform theſe Abuſes, and to rectify theſe Interpretations, which having done in the former Verſes concerning Murder, he begins in the 27th Verſe to clear thoſe Miſtakes which had broken in upon this Precept of *Adultery*: *Ye have heard* (ſays he) *that it was ſaid to thoſe of old, thou ſhalt not commit Adultery*: *But I ſay unto you, whoſoever looketh upon a Woman to luſt after her, hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart.* Where, by the way, we muſt note, that though the Looking of a Man upon a Woman be only ſpecified, yet the Looking of a Woman upon a Man is equally intended; and tho' Adultery be here only named, yet all the Species of it are underſtood; only our Saviour, having once inſiſted upon that Particular, continues his Diſcourſe to it, that ſo the Compariſon and Proportion between the outward Actions of the Body, and the inward Actions of the Heart (which he principally aimed at) might more evidently and more immediately appear.

In the Words themſelves we may conſider theſe Parts, the Crime and the Fact: The Fact in theſe Words, *he that looketh upon a Woman to luſt after her*; the Crime in theſe, *hath committed Adultery in his Heart.* Where

Firſt, We ſhall conſider the Nature of Adultery in general.

Secondly, Adultery, as it is reſtrained to the Heart only, Then,

Thirdly, In the Matter of Fact we ſhall conſider,

Firſt, The luſting after a Woman.

Then, The looking upon her to luſt.

After which (having thus explained the Terms, and put the Caſe) we ſhall endeavour to reſolve, how and in what Senſe this Saying of our Saviour is to be underſtood.

All

All which when we have done, doctrinally, we ſhall go over the ſeveral Parts again in the ſame Order, and propoſe ſuch Motives to your Affections as God hath been pleaſed to put into our Mind.

We begin with the Conſideration of Adultery in general. Adultery, as it is the Breach of that Faith which is ſolemnly given in Marriage, whether it be by the Man or by the Woman, a great Sin ſure; whether in reſpect of God, or in reſpect of Men; in reſpect of God, who was ſolemnly invocated to be a Witneſs of that Covenant which we wilfully violate, in the Preſence of whom and his bleſſed Angels, and the Church of Chriſt, the married Perſons mutually promiſed their Fidelity to each other; ſo that (as the Apoſtle ſays) they have now no longer Power over their own Bodies, in which they have parted with their Right and Property, and indeed they are now no longer their own, but one another's, and ſo true and real is this Change, and ſo near and individual is this Union, that the Expreſſion of the Apoſtle ſeems to be very high and hyperbolical, and reliſhing ſomewhat of the Poet and the Lover, when he tells us, that it is *Magnum Sacramentum*, a high and a holy Myſtery; when he thinks it to be a fit Type and Reſemblance of that which the moſt ſtraining Heights, the moſt gallant Compariſons, and the moſt boaſting Expreſſions of our Love and Poetry together come infinitely ſhort of; and that is, the Love and Union between Chriſt and his Church; an Union ſo near, that it is indeed *Fleſh of his Fleſh, and Bone of his Bone*; for the ſame Spirit that conceived him conceives that, dwells in that, quickens and enlivens and moves that; ſo that it is not only figuratively and myſtically, but truly and indeed his very Body, as the Nouriſhment which I receive and digeſt, and becomes informed with my Soul, is a Part of my Body; ſo near and ſo wonderful is this Union. And as for the Love of Chriſt to his Church, it is a Flame as far tranſcending ours, as the heavenly does the elementary; that is, that that brought him down from Heaven, from the Throne, nay, from the Boſom of the Father; that cloathed him with our Corruption, our miſerable Fleſh; debaſed him to the Form

of

of a Servant, and ſubjected him to thoſe mean, but withal to thoſe affectionate Services, which all our vain and mortal Love is ſo far from approaching, that it muſt vaniſh and hide itſelf before that ſacred Charity both with Shame and Wonder; and all this to teach us, how holy and unviolable the Tye and Union, how pure, how chaſte, how fervent, how unchangeable, how honourable the Love of Marriage ought to be.

A Tranſgreſſion therefore againſt this Tye, and this Love, muſt needs be an heinous Sin, heinous in reſpect of God, who is made a Witneſs of that Covenant; and in this reſpect it was reaſonably done of him who excepted againſt the Teſtimony of an Adulterer, as againſt a Man perjured already; heinous in reſpect of the Perſon who is made a Party to that Covenant, with whom we ſo careleſly break our Faith and Loyalty; and laſtly, very heinous in reſpect of our Neighbour, whoſe Hedge we break down, and whoſe Encloſure we lay waſte, whilſt we do not only purloin and defile and diſhonour that which is his moſt proper Poſſeſſion, that which is as much his own as his own Body is, his Wife: Not only diſhonour her, and her whole Family together, but we invade and encroach upon his Inheritance alſo, by making our Baſtard his Heir; ſuborning and ſtealing into the Poſſeſſion of his Eſtate the Son of that Perſon, whom of all Men living he has reaſon to deteſt, for having been his cauſeleſs, but moſt injurious Enemy. You ſee therefore the Nature of the Crime here mentioned, how great a Sin it is in reſpect of the Impiety towards God, and how great it is alſo in reſpect of the Injury towards Men.

It comes next to be conſidered, that this Crime (as foul as it is) may be committed in the Heart only: *He that looketh on a Woman to luſt after her hath already committed Adultery in his Heart.*

In his Heart: That is, tho' he hath not committed it in the outward Act, but only in his Will and Intention, for indeed it is the Will only that gives the Stamp and the Value to the outward Actions; the ſame Act, in reſpect of ſeveral Intentions, may either be a bloody Murther, or an haſty Manſlaughter, or an unfortunate Accident,

or

or an innocent Defence, *That which defiles a Man*, ſaith our Saviour, *enters not into a Man, but cometh forth from within him, from the Heart*; there's the Fountain that defiles the Stream, 'tis not the Stream that defiles the Fountain.

That the *Jews*, at this Time, had, by their licentious and indulged Traditions and Gloſſes, very much defaced and darkened this Truth, and had begot an Opinion, very common to the Nation, that a Forbearance of the Outward Act only was all that the Law of God required from them, may appear, both by the often and eatneſt Endeavours of our Saviour to aſſert the Divine Law to its primitive, and genuine, and ſpiritual Senſe, and to reſtore it to its univerſal Latitude and Obligation upon the Spirit of Man; as alſo by a Paſſage in the Twelfth Book of *Joſephus*'s Antiquities; who being himſelf a learned, and a wiſe and well-born Perſon among the People, yet takes Occaſion to wonder at the Error of *Polybius*, the *Grecian* Hiſtorian (as he accounts it) That the Intention only of Sacrilege in *Antiochus* was the Cauſe why he was purſued with Divine Vengeance, ending a wicked Life with a deſpairing and torturing Death; as if, ſays he, God uſed to puniſh Intentions only? So much more, you ſee, the Light of Nature only in a wiſe and un-intereſted *Heathen* was able to diſcover, than the Underſtanding of a *Jew*, bred up to the Knowledge of the Law, and otherways wiſe and learned; only becauſe it was betray'd and blinded by Prejudice, and the Tradition of his Teachers.

Joſephus indeed were in the right, if we conſider Man only as a Citizen, as a Member and Part of a Community, ſo his Thoughts and Deſires can come into no Account; no Tribunal here upon Earth can take Cognizance, or exerciſe Juriſdiction over that which paſſes within a Man; if it proceed not to outward Act, as to human Law, he is reputed Innocent; and, even in reſpect of God alſo, the outward Act being added, much aggravates the Fault, draws more Guilt and Puniſhment upon the Offender; both becauſe, when we proceed ſo far, we give a greater Declaration of our Will fully and perfectly

conſenting unto Sin; and becauſe we then only offer Injury, and occaſion much more Sin and Scandal to others: Yet, notwithſtanding, tho' the outward Act add to the Guilt, yet it does not cauſe it. Our Saviour's Doctrine ſtands good ſtill, *That which defiles a Man proceeds from within*; there the ſpiritual Poiſon firſt ſpreads it ſelf; the Sinfulneſs proceeds from the Obliquity of the Action, from the Unlawfulneſs, from the Diſagreement it hath with the Divine Law, which ought to be the Rule and Meaſure of all our Actions: It is the Tranſgreſſion of that that makes a Sin, and the Tranſgreſſion of that, in this Particular, that makes this particular Sin. The Conſent of the Will to an unlawful Deſire after a Woman, tho' no outward Act follow, is that inward Adultery which our Saviour here ſpeaketh of, and fully comprehends the Nature of the Crime, which I promiſed to ſhew you.

We come next to the Matter of the Fact, which is here double, Luſting and Looking; but firſt of Luſting.

What this Luſt here is, tho' many are guilty of it, yet perhaps there are many alſo that are ignorant what the exact Meaning of it is, that do not ſufficiently conceive the full Latitude and Extent of it; and they muſt indeed be more excuſable, becauſe it is a Point that even St. *Paul* was once ignorant off: *I had not known Luſt*, ſays he, *unleſs the Law had ſaid, thou ſhalt not luſt*, Rom. vii. What, did not St. *Paul*, think we, know the Commandment? or was he ignorant of that which even *Polybius*, an *Heathen*, could diſcover, That the inward Conſent, the Intention and Reſolution to ſin, was Sin? This certainly cannot be the Meaning of this Place, there muſt be ſome higher Senſe of it than ſo. St. *James* will help us to the beſt Expoſition of it [*James* i. 14.] *Every Man*, ſays he, *is tempted, when he is drawn away, and enticed by his own Luſts*; they move blindly and ſuddenly to whatſoever is acceptable to the Fleſh, and delightful to the Senſe, without any Advice of Reaſon at all, without any Subjection to the Spirit of our Mind, without any conforming themſelves to that which ought to be the Rule of human Actions, the Law of God. Now certainly that which tempts to Evil muſt needs be evil it ſelf; that which

which is perfectly good cannot tempt us; therefore, says St. *James*, God cannot do it, becauſe he is ſo. Whatſoever does tempt us, therefore, muſt needs be evil; for Temptation to Sin being an evil Fruit, muſt needs proceed from an evil Tree, a Tree that hath its Root as deep as the firſt Sin of the firſt Man; and our original Corruption is the Cauſe that there is any ſuch Thing as unlawful Luſt in us, unlawful, I ſay, which is therefore evil, becauſe unagreeable and unconformable to the Law of God, therefore evil; becauſe rebelling againſt the Law of our Mind, and ſo violating that Order and Harmony which God at firſt placed in our Soul.

But that we may more diſtinctly conceive the Luſt that is here ſpoken of, and the true Nature of it, it is fit that we learn it of St. *James* [James v. 14. 15.] where he diſcovers the Progreſs of it, and deſcribes to us the ſeveral Steps, and Riſes, and Periods of this Evil. *Every one is tempted*, &c.

Out of which Words the Schools have obſerved three ſeveral Steps and Gradations of Sin, the Suggeſtion, the Delight, the Content. Firſt, the Suggeſtion, which is not, certainly (as ſome conceived) only when either our Memory or our Senſe do propoſe to us an Object in it ſelf delightful to the Senſes, the enjoying whereof is contrary to the Law of God; but when it is propoſed to us under the Conſideration of being enjoy'd, when, by the Help and Aſſiſtance of our Nature, and rebellious Corruption, this very unlawful Enjoying is preſented and ſuggeſted to our Deſires, towards which the firſt Motions, the Starts, and Beckenings, and Twitches of our Deſires are the firſt Degree of Sin; then we are, as the Apoſtle ſays, *drawn away by our Luſts*.

The next is, the Delight and Contentment that we take in the Contemplation of that unlawful Enjoying; *then Sin conceives*, ſaith St. *James*, for it conceives with Delight.

The laſt is, that expreſs and formal Conſent of the Will, to exerciſe and put in Practice what has been thus ſuggeſted, and ſo delightful unto us; then it becomes, as St. *Paul* ſays, *compleat and perfect Sin*. And, indeed,

theſe three Degrees are not unfitly compared to the three Perſons that acted their ſeveral Parts in the firſt Sin of *Adam*; namely, to the Serpent, the Woman, and the Man. The Serpent, there's the inſinuating Suggeſtion; the Delight, there's the deceived Woman; and the Conſent, there's all Luſt; the Man, and then all is compleat. Now, to draw our Diſcourſe to a Head, after we have thus opened the Caſe: The Queſtion now to be ſtated and reſolved is, whether all or ſome only of theſe Degrees are here meant by our Saviour, when he tell us, *That he that looketh upon a Woman to luſt after her, hath already committed Adultery in his Heart.*

Concerning the laſt, the expreſs and formal Conſent of the Will to perform this Sin, I have already ſhew'd you, that it is directly and properly that which our Saviour here calls the Adultery of the Heart: Concerning the ſecond there may ſeem to be ſome Difficulty; I am not apt to make Sins that God hath not; and I ſhould be very ſhye of determining the Particular, but that I find thoſe who agree very little among themſelves, *Dominicans*, *Jeſuites*, *Lutherans*, *Calviniſts*, yet to agree upon this Point, that which they call *Delectatio Moroſa*; namely, that the Delight about enjoying an unlawful Object (if, at the leaſt, it have any Stay and Continuance with us) is alſo to be put in the ſame Rank with Conſent itſelf; becauſe the Will, tho' it do not formally conſent, yet implicitly it does; becaaſe it does not curb and reſtrain, as, by Duty, it is bound to do; it offends as a Governour, tho' not as an Actor; in ſuffering, tho' not in doing; and that therefore even ſuch a Delight, in this particular Sin, tho' we do not fully and reſolutely intend and purpoſe to commit it, is alſo comprehended under this Adultery of the Heart here ſpoken of by our Saviour. Laſtly, concerning the firſt Degree, thoſe ſudden Starts and firſt Motions towards unlawful Acts, tho' they are evil in themſelves, yet, out of God's Mercy, they are not ſo imputed to thoſe that are in Chriſt: Not that the Nature of them is changed, that of evil they ſhould become good; but that the Effect of them is changed; as to us-wards, they are not evil to Condemnation; that is, if we be afflicted

afflicted and troubled, not pleaſed and delighted with them; they are left, as the *Canaanites* were amongſt the *Iſraelites*, to keep us humble towards God, and ſollicitous in our ſelves, to exerciſe us, not to ruin us. Not that we ſhould yield, but that we ſhould conquer; for our Virtue and Tryal, not for our Deſtruction and Condemnation.

You ſee now what this Luſting is our Saviour ſpeaks of: We come next to the Looking, *He that looketh*, &c. Of which very briefly.

There may be ſeveral Senſes of thoſe Words, *he that looketh to luſt*; for this πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι, this πρὸς here denotes either the Event of Looking, or the End of Looking: The Event of Looking, that is, he that looketh and afterwards doth luſt; or the End of Looking, that is, he that looketh purpoſely that he may luſt: Concerning the latter of theſe, he that looketh purpoſely that he may luſt, he that employs his Senſes as Factors for his Luſts, to provide Fuel for that Fire, and to ſearch out Objects for thoſe unlawful Deſires; he that, as the Apoſtle ſays, *has Eyes full of Adultery*, and therefore looketh that he may luſt; of ſuch a Perſon as this we ſhall make no Scruple to determine, that he directly falls under our Saviour's Cenſure here, and is one of thoſe that has *already committed Adultery in his Heart*.

Concerning the other; he that looketh only, and afterwards luſteth, tho' in that Look of his he had no ſuch Intention, yet, if his Curioſity or his Negligence be ſo great, that he has no Care at all of his Senſes, that ſuffers his Eyes to run at Random, and makes no manner of Covenant with them, and ſets no Watch upon thoſe Windows, at which Death may enter in; if he ſo look that he do luſt; if this Event do enſue upon him, by his own Default; if his Soul be ſo like a City without Gates and Bars, that all Objects are ſuffer'd to enter in without Controul; if he have no Care at all of the firſt Degree of Sin, which is the Suggeſtion, but entertains a Parley with this Serpent, and either negligently or curiouſly leads himſelf into Temptation; if, upon that Suggeſtion, there follow Delight, and with that Delight Sin conceives (much more if it proceed ſo far as to Conſent, and ſo Sin become per-

fect and conſummate) tho' I pity his Caſe much more than the former, yet I dare not abſolve him from the Guilt, but muſt render him up to the Cenſure of our Saviour here, and, not out of my Severity, but out of my Affection and Care of his Soul, and his eternal Good, I muſt tell him, plainly and friendly, that I do more than fear, that ſuch a Look, with ſuch an Event enſuing, will, at the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, be reckoned *Adultery in the Heart.*

I have at the length diſcovered to you the Nature both of the Crime and of the Fact, and have ſtated the Caſe, and given you ſuch Reaſons as to me ſeem concluding, why, and in what Senſe this Fact of looking after a Woman to luſt after her ought to be reputed the committing Adultery in one's Heart. I come next to propoſe ſuch Motives to your Affections, to avoid this Crime, and take heed of this Fact, as have offer'd themſelves to my Conſideration; and firſt concerning Adultery.

But what ſhall I ſay of Adultery in an Aſſembly of Chriſtians, eſpecially of ſuch Chriſtians as I hope and am perſwaded are here preſent to hear me? a Crime ſo impious towards God, and ſo unjuſt towards Men, ſo unclean againſt our ſelves: This is a Crime, ſays *Job*, *to be puniſh'd by the Judges*; the Purity of the Law of Chriſt needs not trouble it ſelf about ſo foul a Sin as this is; civil Laws ought to take Notice and puniſh this; human Society cannot ſubſiſt with this Sin; a Crime that breaks thro' all Covenants, confounds all Races and Families, diſturbs and unſettles all Inheritances, and fills the whole World with Tumult and Madneſs and Confuſion. O! my beloved Brethren, we need ſeek no further Cauſe of the Confuſion of this State, than to have this Crime frequent amongſt us; of this ſays our Saviour, *Dictum eſt antiquis*, long ago this Sin has been forbidden, it has been reputed abominable ever ſince Mankind has been upon the Earth; in the darkeſt Times no Nation ſo barbarous as not to acknowledge it; and, in the wickedeſt of Times (wonder not at my Expreſſions) no Nation ſo extreamly civil as yet to forget it; even thoſe Prodigies of Luſt and Blood, the *Roman* Tyrants themſelves, enacted

Laws

Laws and Penalties againſt it; and, therefore, for my Part, methinks I find my ſelf in the ſame Condition as that Law-giver was, who refuſed to make a Law againſt *Parricide*, becauſe he preſumed no body would commit it; and therefore he was loth to hatch it, by forbidding of it; for it is of a much leſſer Sin than this, tho' of it ſelf great enough, God knows, that St. *Paul* ſays, *Let it not once be named amongſt Chriſtians;* and therefore, of this Sin, I hope we ſhall be ſo far from the Impudence of naming it, that we ſhall not ſo much as have the Sinfulneſs of thinking of it. For let us conſider, I beſeech you, only two Motives upon which St. *Paul* perſwades us to avoid Fornication, much more Adultery; you ſhall find them in the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians* (a People whoſe City was very notorious for that Vice) and the ſixth Chapter of that Epiſtle; the Motives are, briefly, theſe: That they ſhould therefore *forbear that Sin, becauſe their Members were Members of Chriſt*, and becauſe alſo they were *Temples of the Holy Ghoſt*. Beloved, we of the Clergy ſay ſomething ſometimes concerning Sacrilege, and, when we do ſo, we are counted Fools for our Labour; but whether that which we call Sacrilege be ſo or no, God will one Day judge; and I am horribly afraid leſt he be judging it already: But, I ſay, be that as it will, I am ſure, that which St. *Paul* ſpeaks of here is Sacrilege to the Purpoſe, to prophane the *Temple of the Holy Ghoſt*, a *Temple which God has made, and not Man*, a *Temple* in which God inhabits, wherein the Holy Ghoſt does truly and literally dwell and reſide; to prophane this, not only to worldly Buſineſs, but to ſinful Buſineſs, to Luſt, to Uncleanneſs, to Fornication; to take the *Members of Chriſt*, and make them the *Members of an Harlot*, as the Apoſtle ſays; certainly, my Brethren, it is the moſt rhetorical, the moſt emphatical Expreſſion in the whole Bible; the *Members of Chriſt*, ſo pure, ſo holy, ſo chaſte, ſo honourable; and to make theſe the *Members of an Harlot*; an *Harlot!* What's that? Why, what is it but the *Common Sewer* that receives all the Filth of the Town? I humbly crave your Pardon for my Expreſſion; it is indeed too ſhort, it is not home enough: Alas! this

receives

receives but the natural Filthineſs, but the other receives all the moral Filthineſs. We would account it an horrid thing, for one to take the Body of Chriſt, and tread it in the Dirt under his Feet, and tumble it up and down in the Kennel; why, it is much worſe to take his *Members* and make them the *Members of an Harlot*; a Creature that is made up of Luſt and Impudence, and the Abſence of all Virtue, more diſeaſed in her Soul than ſhe is in her Body; not only moſt abominable to vertuous Minds, but even to thoſe Perſons themſelves that make uſe of her; nay, I am perſwaded, at that very Time when they are carried headlong with the violent Rage of their impetuous Luſt; and yet to take the *Members of an Harlot*; why, 'tis not poſſible the Apoſtle ſhould give a higher Expreſſion than this.

Beloved, we are apt to think, that our Members are our own, that we may do what we liſt with them; but St. *Paul* will tell us, we are much deceived; *You are bought with a Price*, ſays he in the laſt Verſe, you are none of your own: A Price, what Price is that? Not thoſe *Corruptible* Things *of Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of the Son of God;* and, after all this Coſt beſtowed upon us, ſhall we ſo unworthily employ that which has been ſo dearly purchaſed, ſhall we any longer ſin againſt our own Bodies, with this Foulneſs of Fornication; ſhall we ſo prophane the *Temples of the Holy Spirit*, and ſo horribly pollute and defile the *Members of the Body of the Son of God!* O conſider this, you that forget God, leſt he pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you! O conſider, I beſeech you, that if you be once pluckt away from being Members of him who is the Saviour of the World, there can no manner of Deliverance be left either for your Body or your Soul!

I have done with this Part, I pray God we have done with the ſame alſo; I come next to ſpeak of the ſecond Part, which is, the *Adultery of the Heart*.

And of this, certainly, many muſt plead Guilty that are innocent as to the other; and indeed the Guilt of this is ſo much leſs, as the Damnation of one alone is leſs than the Damnation of two together; for the *Adultery*

of

of the Body cannot be committed by a ſingle Perſon; two together muſt be involved in that Guilt; that's an Aggravation that I did not tell you of before, and, certainly, it is a Conſideration that will one Day fall heavy, and lie like a Talent of Lead upon the Souls of the Adulterers and Fornicators; that when one of them is reclaimed from the Errors of their Way, the other runs ſtill at Riot in their former Sins, drenched in the Habits of thoſe Luſts which they have cheriſhed and contracted together, eaſy to be corrupted, but not ſo eaſy to be reclaimed; the one going to Life with *Pardon* and *Repentance*, the other, with *Impenitency*, to Death and Damnation: O! think, think, beforehand, what ſad Thoughts concerning this Particular muſt one Day poſſeſs you! how cloſe, how heavy it will ſit to your Souls to have been the Authors of another's *unrepented Sins*, and the Inſtruments of another's *Miſery* for ever; how foul, how black, how fooliſh this Wickedneſs will then appear to you! that the Horror will then be ſo great to you, that you will eſteem them to be in a Degree of Bleſſedneſs that have no Sins to account for but their own; and, in reſpect of this *Adultery* of the Body, will repute it ſome approaching towards Innocence, to have committed only the *Adultery of the Heart*.

How great therefore muſt the other Crime be, in reſpect of which this, here ſo condemned by our Saviour, looks like *Innocence*, and, indeed, well does it deſerve to be ſo condemned, for alas! what Thanks is it to us, if we have had the Conſent to ſin, tho' not the Opportunity? If we have forborn, only becauſe we have wanted the Confidence of ſolliciting, or the Probability of conſenting, or the Conveniency of attaining it? If we have therefore only been leſs guilty becauſe God, in his Mercy, has not permitted it in our Power to be more!

The Will is reckoned for the Deed in the Sight of God; miſerable were we if it were not ſo in our good Works, and therefore it is but juſt it ſhould be ſo in our ill Works too; before his Eyes *all Things are naked*, ſays the Prophet; but *he tryeth the Heart and Reins*, ſearcheth into the inward Parts and Corners of our Souls:

Man's

Man's Judgment, muſt content it ſelf with the Appearance only; all the *Hypotheſes*, the Suppoſitions that we can make here below muſt be according to the *Phænomena* only, when we have ſolved them, and many times before that alſo our Buſineſs is done; but God he ſees the Courſe and Order of our Thoughts, *underſtands them* long before, ſays the *Pſalmiſt*, judges them by their Cauſes, diſcerns the Spring from whence they flow, the End to which they run, the Rule by which they are meaſured.

O! if we would take the *Omniſcience* and this *Omnipreſence* of God a little more to Heart, *what manner of Perſons* would *we be in all Holineſs of Converſation*? What foul Sins would we forbear, out of Awfulneſs to the Preſence of that infinite Majeſty? Whereas, for want of this, what a goodly Spectacle, think you, in the Sight of God, are ſome meditating Hearts!

We ſhould account it an horrid thing, if any ſhould be ſo void of Shame as to commit *Adultery* in publick, much more if he ſhould do it in a Church; much more then if he ſhould do it before the whole Congregation, and that alſo at the Time when our Prayers were offered to God, or his Meſſage delivered to us; ſuch an Act ſure we ſhould repute a *Sacrilegious Impudence*; and there would not be ſome *Phineas* wanting, that would be ready to ſtrike thro' ſuch a *Zimri* with his *Javelin*; yet, in the Sight of that God that made the World, in the Preſence of him who is the Judge of Spirits, how often do we commit this *Adultery of the Heart*, in private, in publick, in the great Aſſembly? I will not ſay in the Church, at the time of Prayers, of Sermon, even of this Sermon, whilſt I am ſpeaking againſt it, and that ſome come hither only for that very Purpoſe; yet ſome there are that ſtick not to ſay, ſo I would not pray for any Sin, yet I pray God this be rather Malice than Truth; but if any have been ſo miſerably guilty, as to come hither with ſo foul an Intention, I hope God has this Day met him in his Way, as the Angel did the Madneſs of the Prophet, and that from henceforth he will proceed no further; take heed, *ſin ſo no more, leſt a worſe thing happen unto thee.*

But I am weary of this Dunghil, I have dwelt too long in the Stench of it; I pass therefore to my third Part, from the Crime to the Matter of Fact, *He that looketh on a Woman to lust after her*; he that lusteth.

And here first of all (that we may refresh our selves with a better Prospect than we have hitherto had) let us first consider the extream and wonderful Purity of the Law of Christ, that troubles not it self about outward Actions, contents not itself with the Consent of the Will, but forbids the Delight of the Appetite, and takes Care even of the prime Affections and first Motions of the Heart to sin; for, as I told you in the Beginning, tho' these first Motions shall not condemn us, yet it is not because they are not evil in themselves, but because they are not so imputed to us; God lays not aside his *Justice*, but he takes to him his *Mercy*; he sees those first Motions, and he sees them as Sins, but he sees the Mediator too; nay, he both sees and hates these first Motions; but it is as a Physician sees the Disease of his beloved Son, whom he does not therefore hate, because he has that Disease; he hates the Disease, but he loves his Son, and would therefore destroy the Disease, that he may save the Child.

How much therefore ought we to humble our selves before this gracious God? Humble our selves before his Justice, when we consider our own Deserts, and humble our selves before his Mercy, when we consider his Readiness to pardon, and his Willingness to amend us? How ought we to put on such Affections to our selves as he has towards us, to love our Persons, and to hate our Corruptions? If we be pleased, if we be delighted with them, there's no Hope of Cure, nay, there's no Hope of Pardon; we every Minute grow sicker and sicker, 'till we are sick unto Death; if we will recover our lost Health, we must grieve, we must be angry with these Lusts, charm them away with our Prayers, wear them away with Fasting, vex them away with Labour; let a charitable Industry employ those Affections that break into Lust; let it come forth in Fruit, that would run out in Weeds; the Heart of Man will still be putting out somewhat; if Grace work not, Corruption will; if our Heart be suffer'd

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to be like a ſtanding Pool, we muſt expect the Surface of it to be covered with Froth and Scum; where there is *Fulneſs of Bread, and Idleneſs to boot*, we muſt expect even the Sins of *Sodom* to follow after; God has put it into our Power to avoid or overcome theſe Temptations, by Devotion, by Auſterity, by Buſineſs; much more not to lead our ſelves into Temptation; not to *look upon a Woman that we may luſt after her*, which is my laſt Part, *He that looketh*.

And here I muſt not paſs by a good Obſervation of St. *Chryſoſtome* upon this Text of our Saviour, *He that looketh upon a Woman*, &c. that tho', at the firſt Bluſh, it may appear to be *Durus Sermo*, a hard Saying; and we are ready to cry out, with the Diſciples, *who can bear it?* yet, if we conſider it well, ſays he, it will appear to have more of Gentleneſs and Lenity, than of Hardneſs and Severity: Had our Saviour, indeed, enjoyned us to look, and, withal, forbidden us to luſt, it had been, perhaps, to many Men, as if he had bidden them to ſtand by the Fire, and yet forbidden them to be warm; but, when he forewarns us of our Danger, and ſhews how to avoid it; when he tells us, if we be apt to luſt, we ſhould take Care not to look, this, ſure, is Mercy and Lenity; for 'tis as if a Friend ſhould thus adviſe us; has Drunkenneſs, at any Time, put you in Danger of your Life, and are you apt to be overcome with Wine when you drink? If you have not the Gift of Temperance, forbear it altogether; better to drink no Wine at all, than to be in Danger of Death by it. So our Saviour here, Can you not make a Covenant with your Heart not to luſt? Why then make a Covenant with your Eyes not to look: I am ſure that is in your Power; if you would not ſin, do not run into Temptation.

But you will ſay, Why, to what End was Beauty made then, if it were not made to be ſeen and looked upon? Here's a Doctrine that turns all things into the firſt *Chaos*, that brings Darkneſs upon the World again, or at the leaſt makes Light wholly unuſeful, for what Uſe is there of Light, if Uglineſs and Beauty muſt be equally forborn? So wiſe we are for our own Hurt, and ſo wittily, as we think,

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we argue for our own Deſtruction; the Light we know is a beautiful Creature, and *a pleaſant thing it is to behold the Sun*, ſays *Solomon*; yet we think it very reaſonable for the Phyſician to ſay to us, are your Eyes ſore? Then forbear to look upon the beautiful Light; and in the mean time we do not think it reaſonable for the Phyſician of our Souls to ſay to us, are your Eyes luſtful? Then forbear to look upon that beautiful Woman: Yes, perhaps, we begin to think it ſomewhat reaſonable, but we ſtruggle againſt it with Grudging and Diſcontent, juſt as the ſick Man does againſt his Phyſician, that, out of his Care to him, has ſtrictly forbidden ſuch or ſuch a Meat; he thinks fit to obey at laſt, but with ſuch a Repining, ſuch a Languiſhing, and unwilling Obedience, as if he had now no Pleaſure left in Life; as if it were all one to him, to refrain this, and to dye; what Care now has the Phyſician for ſo preverſe, ſo wrangling an Appetite, but to deal plainly with him, that he may eat if he pleaſe, but, if he do, he will certainly dye? So here, what! take away all Pleaſure of Life! no looking upon that beautiful Sex! as good then pull out our Eyes alſo. Right, ſays our Saviour (reſolutely ſhaking off this wrangling Sophiſtry) not only as good, but you had better do ſo than luſt. *If thine Eye offend*, ſays he in the next Verſe, yea, though it be thy right Eye, moſt dear, moſt uſeful to thee, yet *pluck it out*, though it be with Pain, *and caſt it from thee*; though it be with Regret; for thine Eyes were given thee for thy Benefit, to direct thee in thy way; not to be unto thee an Occaſion of falling; *better one of thy Members ſhould periſh, than thy whole Body be caſt into Hell:* If thine Eye be more worth than thy whole Body, if to look with the Danger of luſting be a greater Pleaſure than the Sufferings of Hell-fire be a Pain, then look on and ſpare not; but if, as the Prophet ſays, *No Man can dwell with perpetual Burnings*, then ſure it is better to forbear a ſhort Pleaſure, than to hazard eternal Torment.

Well, perhaps, at laſt we are reſolved to obey this Precept, yet our Nature is ready to cry out *Durus Sermo*, 'tis a hard Task tho'; and to ſinful Men it is ſo indeed: My Bretheren, I beſeech God, every Day, to make it eaſier to every one of us; but remember, withal, that Hell's an

ill Place; and Heaven is a very good one; that Chriſt hath performed a much harder Task for our Sakes; that the Buſineſs we are now upon is Matter either of eternal Death or eternal Life; that *ſtrait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leadeth to that Life, and few there be that find it;* that *Heaven is enter'd by Violence, and the Violent take it by Force*, not getting thither unleſs we offer Force and Violence to our Corruptions and Luſts, and put a Curb and Reſtraint upon our natural Inclinations, a Watch and a Guard upon our outward Senſes: I confeſs it is a hard Task; but, that I may make it more eaſy to you, I ſhall now ſay ſomewhat to the other Sex, and I ſhall, at laſt, turn my Diſcourſe from thoſe that look, to thoſe that are looked upon.

For you are they that muſt aſſiſt in this Cure, and contribute your Part to the Obſervation of this Precept of our Saviour; for as God hath committed to Men the Protection of your Safety, ſo alſo he hath intruſted to you the Conſervation of their Chaſtity. To look upon you (as things are carried by the Cuſtom of this Country) for the moſt part lies wholly in their Power, but to look ſo that they may not luſt, that commonly lies very much in yours; for let the Fruit be never ſo pleaſant to the Eye, if there be no Hope that it will be fit for Food, the Serpent will have but little Encouragement for his Temptation: It may, indeed, fall out, that if Angels themſelves ſhould deſcend from Heaven, and appear cloathed in human Beauty, there may not want ſuch Sons of *Belial*, that may even break thro' a Door to attempt their Chaſtity; but theſe are the Children of *Sodom*. Our Cities have few ſuch Inhabitants; few Men are come to that Excellency of Wickedneſs, as to be like *Satan* himſelf, who delights to tempt the Vertuous moſt; no, no, that wretched miſcall'd Love, that has ſeduced ſo many Souls to their Ruin; that which our Saviour calls by its true Name, how gentle ſoever we may think fit to deal with it; that which is indeed our *Idleneſs* is made our Buſineſs, has not yet arrived to ſuch Poetical Tasks, as to have Impoſſibility for its Object; they are Fools only which ſit down to view a Strength which themſelves eſteem impregnable.

A Woman

A Woman certainly may, if ſhe pleaſe, carry herſelf with that Gallantneſs of Chaſtity, and be ſo fortified by a publick Reputation, that, even in the midſt of a crooked Generation, when weaker Places are daily taken in about her, yet ſhe may ſtand alone, not only unconquered and unattempted, but even unhoped for and undeſired; ſhe may be ſo conſecrated, by her known Vertues, that nothing that is vile, nothing that has but Suſpicion of Evil, ſhall dare to approach her; that we ſhall not have the Confidence to dart any Look to her Face that we would not ſend up towards Heaven; nor preſent any Suit to that Ear, that we would not bring to the Temple and the Altar. And, as when we ſee a comely and magnificent Structure dedicated to the divine Service, it adds an Advantage even to pious Thoughts, and ſtrikes religious Reverence into all ſober Men, whilſt the very beholding theſe things to be conſecrated to God (which, were they applied even to ill Uſes, would yet retain in themſelves an inherent Excellency) does, even by our Senſes, lead us on to Devotion, and cauſes a ſecret and happy Conſent and Harmony between the ſpiritual and ſenſible Part of Man, in holy Duties; ſo alſo thoſe Perſons whom God hath built in an extraordinary manner, and indued with Beauty above others; if theſe, I ſay, in an Age, and Complexion, and Conſtitution ripe for Delight, and ſeaſoned for Pleaſure, ſhall yet conſecrate themſelves to God and his Service, by Works of Piety and Charity; and not only by an unblemiſhed Life, but by pure and unſpotted Thoughts, preſerve themſelves either in a ſingle or conjugal Chaſtity; O what Good is there that theſe Perſons may not do! How many Men may they conduct to Heaven, that perhaps might have been ſo unhappy as to have followed, had they led on, to Hell? What a Teſtimony will it be to Religion, to ſee the beſt and choiceſt things thus conſecrated to it? How will they be like the Fat of the Sacrifice to increaſe Mens Devotion! And how exceedingly, to the Honour of their Creator, will they be able to employ that natural Dominion that Beauty enjoys over the Hearts of the Spectators.

For, Beloved, I hope we are not ſo vain, or ſo wicked, as to think that Beauty is none of God's Gifts; ſure, if it be, it may be employed to his Glory; Men may behold it to their Benefit, as well as look upon it to luſt. God has not ſent it into the World, as a Trap and a Snare, only to do Miſchief; and given it ſo great a Power over the Soul of Man, only to deſtroy it; no, no; we read, in the *Eccleſiaſtial Story*, how great an Influence, towards the Converſion of the firſt Chriſtian King of *France*, proceeded from the Beauty and Agreeableneſs of his Chriſtian Wife. And, even in our *Engliſh* Story, we find thus much; that God ſtirred up the Heart of *Gregory*, the Pope, to ſend Preachers to our *Saxon* Anceſtors, only by beholding the Comelineſs of ſome of the Inhabitants, then Priſoners at *Rome*; and, in the wonderful Providence of God, it was ſo diſpoſed, that the firſt Occaſion of the Converſion of this Nation was, the Beauty of the People.

Thus, you ſee, God has plac'd it in your Power to be the Inſtruments either of much Good or much Evil, and puts it to your Choice, whether you will lead after you a Train and Retinue of Hearts towards him, or towards his Enemy.

I hope none here will be Authors of a Defection from God; none that will be like the Idolaters Temple, fair and goodly without, but within contain nothing but an Ape or a Goat, or ſome more deformed Monſter; none that ſo adorns, ſo ſets out herſelf, that ſhe may be looked on, that ſhe may be luſted after; that even deſires to be an Object of the Sins of Men, and accounts it her Glory that ſhe has been to many an Occaſion of falling; if there be, I muſt tell her, very plainly, that the Fire of Luſt cannot be kindled without the Fire of Hell too. If ſhe can endure this hereafter, let her pleaſe herſelf in kindling that here. But I hope there are none preſent whom this Admonition may concern.

Only to thoſe who have learned Chriſt, I have a few more Words to ſay, and that is, That they will but ſeriouſly conſider one Expreſſion of St. *Paul*; it is an Expreſſion which before they have heard of in this Place, and

and it is only these Words: *As it becomes Women professing Godliness*; that they would but throughly weigh the Emphasis of these Words *professing Godliness*. Can it stand with the Profession of Godliness to be ashamed of Christ before Men? When you have been conversing with him in a good Book, or a good Discourse, or a good Prayer, or a good Meditation, and lewd Company break in upon you, can it become you to be ashamed of any good Words as long as they are there? Not to afford one Word in Behalf of Christ in that ill Company; but bluntly to say to him, Lord, I desire thee to leave me now, and to come again, at Night, to me, by my Bed's Side, or to-morrow Morning, in my Closet; I must now comply with this Company: We must discourse who loves and is beloved; call that Love which thou call'st Adultery; give it a gentler Name; put a Bait on the Hook, that it may be sure to be swallowed; or, if not bear our Parts of the Discourse, yet give Aim, at least; let the Sin receive some Countenance from us, and our Reputation of Godliness be so far from giving a Reproof, that we shew not the least Dislike; rather be rude to thee than them. Can this, think you, *become Women that profess Godliness*.

Much less can it become you to suffer Men to make such Addresses to you as your selves know to be wholly repugnant to the Law of Christ, and extreamly contrary to the modest Retiredness of your vertuous Ancestors; to call that Friendship which neither tends to Honour here, nor Salvation hereafter: If, indeed, it be Friendship, sure we shall, with Comfort, remember it at our Prayers; I would we could gladly think of that and God together; however, so it becometh *Women professing Godliness* to do. I am sure it does not become them, when they might be as an Apple of the Tree of Life, to lead Men to Blessedness, to suffer themselves to be made an Apple of Good and Evil, to lead Men into Temptation; to be once patient to be looked upon, that they may be lusted after; rather, with *Moses*, to cast a Veil over their Faces, if, at any Time, especially at Prayer Time, there be such a Glory in it, that it cannot be beheld, without

Offence. Sure it will be a Trouble to us, one Day, even againſt our Will, to have been an Occaſion of other Mens Sins; and, how light ſoever we may eſteem of thoſe Wounds we thus make, yet all our Skill will not make them up again; no Phyſician can cure them but the Holy Spirit, and no Medicine can heal them but the Blood of the Son of God. O conſider, therefore, the Words I have handled, how great the Crime, how dangerous the Fact! If you will not conſider them, conſider, at leaſt, who it is that ſays here, *I ſay unto you*. I who love your Souls more than the World does your Body; I who certainly underſtand your Sins, for I have borne them all, and exactly weigh'd the leaſt of them; laſtly, I who muſt judge thoſe Sins, and give Sentence upon them, according as my ſelf, and not any of you, have named them: Conſider, I ſay, what it is that is ſpoken, and who it is that ſpeaks it, and I doubt not but your Practice will be thereafter. Which God, of his infinite Goodneſs and Mercy, grant, for Chriſt Jeſus his Sake: To whom, with the Father, and God the Holy Ghoſt, three glorious Perſons, and one ever living and bleſſed God, be given and aſcribed, both by us and all the World, as is moſt right and due, all Honour and Glory, all Power and Praiſe, Might, Majeſty, Dignity and Dominion, both now, henceforth, and for evermore. *Amen*.

THE

THE
BRIDE-WOMAN's COUNSELLER.

A SERMON Preached at a Wedding, *May* 11. 1699, at *Sherborn* in *Dorſetſhire.*

The EPISTLE to the READER.

COURTEOUS READER,

WHEN thou haſt peruſed this Diſcourſe, thou wilt ſee Cauſe enough to believe me, if I tell thee, it was deſigned only for the Pulpit, not for the Preſs; but it hath ſo fallen out, that the Doctrine therein contained is ſo unhappily repreſented to the World, by ſome ill-natur'd Females, that I am neceſſitated to offer it to a publick View; by Means of which, tho' I ſhould purchaſe the Character of a Blockhead, yet I hope I ſhall get the Advantage of convincing the World that I am not ſuch an impudent Villain as my waſpiſh Accuſers have reported me to be. Be it known unto thee, Reader, whoſoever thou art, that I have not met with one Woman, among all my Accuſers, whoſe Husband is able to give her the Character of a dutiful and obedient Wife. I obſerve alſo, that good Wives are no more offended with my Diſcourſe, than modeſt Matrons are when vile Strumpets are painted in their proper Colours; the moſt that ſuch have to ſay is, that I might have done

done well to have ſaid as much to the Men; which, for their Satisfaction, I promiſe to do, when I ſee this Diſcourſe hath had that happy Succeſs as to reform thoſe imperious Wives, who never think their Husbands love them well, unleſs they will obey them too.

Upon the whole, I find, 'tis Women's Guilt which makes them ſo uneaſy, and puts them to that Pain which they feel in their Conſciences, for which I know no better an Anodyne *than a ſpeedy Repentance and Reformation; which if they neglect, in Deſpight of all their loud Noiſe and Clamours, the Truths which I here publiſh will purſue them to Judgment, and there witneſs againſt them, not only as Traitors to their Husbands, whoſe Authority they uſurp, but as Rebels to the Great Monarch of the World, whoſe ſacred Laws they impiouſly violate.*

Farewel.

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1 COR. vii. 34.

But ſhe that is married careth for the Things of the World, how ſhe may pleaſe her Husband.

THE Word *careth*, in the Original ſignifieth more than ordinary Care, and implies a dividing of the Mind into divers Thoughts, caſting this Way, and that Way, and every Way, how to give the beſt Content. Finding no other Verbal Difficulties, I ſhall leave Words, and paſs to Things, and ſhall lay the Foundation of my Diſcourſe in this Propoſition.

It is a Duty incumbent on all married Women, to be extraordinary careful to content and pleaſe their Huſbands.

From which Doctrine I ſhall take Occaſion faithfully to preſent the Duty of married Women to their Huſbands.

Objection. And why ſo? (may the Women ſay) why could not you have pitch'd upon Ver. 33, and have taken Occaſion

Occaſion from thence to have told married Men their Duty to their Wives? Or, if we muſt be told our Duty, why could you not have come to a Compoſition with us, and have brought our Huſbands in to have ſhared with us?

Anſwer. Truly I foreſaw not only theſe, but a whole *Iliad* of female Objections would be ſtarted againſt my Deſign; but, if Reaſon may take Place, I hope I am able to ſilence them all: And here, amongſt the many Reaſons which might be produc'd to juſtify my Attempt, I ſhall only offer to your Conſideration theſe few.

1. Becauſe the Woman's Duty is harder and more difficult than that of the Man: Precepts for Ruling and Governing are more taking, and have a more pleaſing Reliſh than thoſe which enjoyn Subjection and Obedience. You Women will acknowledge, that Men can learn to command and rule faſt enough, which, as Huſbands, they ought to do; but 'tis very rare to find that Women learn ſo faſt to ſubmit and obey, which, as Wives, they ought to do: Women have need of *Line upon Line*, *Precept upon Precept*, *here a little*, *and there a little*, and all little enough to make them perfect in their Leſſon.

2. Becauſe Women are of weaker Capacities to learn than Men; and therefore, when they have a hard and difficult Leſſon to learn, and but weak Abilities to learn it, they had need of more Help and Aſſiſtance offered them: And ſo it behoves us not only to tell them their Duty, in Conjunction with their Husbands, but alſo to teach them ſingly and by themſelves.

3. Becauſe that (according to the Obſervation which I have made) moſt of thoſe Diſtractions and Diſturbances which have attended a married Life, and that have brought ſo much Reproach and Diſgrace on that honourable State, are owing to the Indiſcretion and Folly, if not to the Obſtinacy and Stubbornneſs of diſobedient Wives; and I ſhall not ſcruple to affirm, that the Number of thoſe bad Huſbands, which their Wives have made ſo, is greater, by far, than the Number of thoſe whom their Wives have found ſo when they were firſt married.

4. Becauſe the Love of a Husband does very much depend upon the Obedience of a Wife; Stubbornneſs and Obſtina-

Obſtinacy, in a Wife, may check and quench the Affections of an Husband, but are no proper Methods to kindle and enflame themſelves. When the Wife becomes pliant and yielding to her Huſband's Will and Deſire, ſhe then leads him Captive, at her Pleaſure, and leaves him ſo faſt bound in the Golden Fetters of Love, that ſhe may do even with him what ſhe pleaſes. *An obedient Wife*, ſays one, *is the likelieſt Woman in the World to command her Husband.* So that, in plain Terms, *you are more afraid than hurt*; and, inſtead of being ſo ſcrupulous about having your Duty told you, you ſhould uſe your utmoſt Diligence to learn and practiſe it, if ever you mean to have your Husbands loving and kind to you.

5. Becauſe that all that I pretend to is, to lay your Duty before you; and ſhall I therefore become your Enemy, becauſe I am come to tell you the Truth? As for good Wives, the Knowledge and Practice of their Duty is ſo comfortable and pleaſant to them, that I am ſure they are not liſted in the Number of theſe Objectors; and I wiſh, that where there is one of theſe there were a thouſand; as for bad ones, I am ſure they have need of being told their Duty, more than a little; and of this Sort I wiſh there were none at all: And if, by my poor Endeavours in this Diſcourſe, I can but be inſtrumental either of leſſening their Number, or preventing their Increaſe, I ſhall obtain my End. Under the Shelter of theſe Reaſons I ſhall adventure, in the Face of all Objections, to purſue my Deſign, which is, to proſecute this Doctrine, *viz.*

That 'tis a Duty incumbent on all married Women, to be extraordinary careful to content and pleaſe their Husbands; which I ſhall do in this Method.

1. Prove it by Reaſon and Argument.

2. Shew how and which way married Women muſt endeavour to pleaſe their Huſbands.

3. Make ſome Improvement of it.

The Reaſons of the Doctrine are ſuch as theſe:

1. Becauſe the Woman was made for the Comfort and Benefit of Man [1 *Cor.* xiv. 9.] *Neither was the Man created for the Woman, but the Woman for the Man.* The great

great End of her Creation (next the Glory of God) was, that ſhe might be ſerviceable and helpful unto Man; and therefore you find, when the wiſe Creator was about to make the Woman, he aſſigns this very Reaſon for it, [*Gen.* ii. 18.] *And the Lord God ſaid, it is not good that Man ſhould be alone, I will make an Help meet for him.*

Now, if the Woman owes her Being to the Comfort and Profit of Man, 'tis highly reaſonable that ſhe ſhould be careful and diligent to content and pleaſe him; otherwiſe ſhe doth wickedly pervert the End of her Creation.

2. Becauſe of the Woman's Occaſion the Man was ruined and undone [1. *Tim.* ii. 14.] *And* Adam *was not deceived, the Woman, being deceived, was in the Tranſgreſſion:* That is, *Adam* was not at firſt deceived, immediately by the *Serpent*, but only inticed and deceived by the Woman, who was the Tempter's Agent; ſo as that ſhe was both firſt in the Tranſgreſſion, in Order of Time, and alſo the Principal, in contributing to the Seduction of the Man; therefore 'tis but fit and juſt, that ſhe, who hath been ſo greatly inſtrumental of ſo much Miſchief and Miſery to Man, ſhould be actively engaged to pleaſe and comfort him: And indeed we find, that God impoſed this Task upon her, as a Puniſhment for ſeducing her Husband [*Gen.* iii. 16.] *And thy Deſire ſhall be to thy Husband, and he ſhall rule over thee:* Wherein is implied, not only Subjection to him, in obeying his Commands, but it reacheth farther, to the bringing under, unto him, the very Deſires of the Heart, to be regulated by him ſo far, that it ſhould not be lawful for her to will or deſire what ſhe herſelf liked, but only what her Husband ſhould approve and allow; even before the Fall, the Will of the Husband was to have been the Woman's Director, as is evident from the foregoing Reaſon, her Compliance with which had been eaſy and pleaſant; but ſince the Fall, Man is grown more humourſome, and hard to be pleaſed, and Woman leſs able and willing to do it; which being ſo thro' her own Means, it was but juſt and righteous with God, to impoſe a Work upon her which herſelf made ſo hard and difficult; and there-

therefore 'tis not the Woman's pleading, that her Husband is hard to be pleased, that will excuse her Negligence herein: This may, indeed, be a Memento to her of her original Guilt, but 'twill by no Means excuse her from the Performance of her present Duty; nay, rather, it should be a Motive of her greatest Diligence. Man in his Innocency had nothing of Morosity and Sowreness of Temper as rendered him highly endeared to his Yoke-fellow: He was then so kind and good-humoured, that he required nothing at her Hands, but what she could perform with Delight and Ease; all his Commands were so full of Charms, that the Woman must first have offered Violence to her Inclinations, before that she could have been able to have resisted them.

He rul'd, and she obey'd; yet she
Did, in obeying, rule as well as he.

Until that fatal Hour came, when the Woman seduced her Husband from his Innocency; and then the Nature of Man was sadly changed, his Temper grew harsh and severe, and Humours became troublesome and tedious; so that the Pleasing of him is now become a Business that requires a great deal of Art and Skill, of Diligence and Industry; and she that is married divides her Mind into divers Thoughts, casts about every Way, and useth Variety of Methods to please her Husband: And this I believe is experienc'd Truth with most Women; which if it be, you may thank your Mother *Eve* for it, who, when she had gotten a good-natur'd and loving Husband, that was easy to be pleased, could not then be contented, but must try Practices with him, till she had spoil'd him; which proved fatal not only to her, but to her Daughters also; who, if they will have Husbands, and have them good too, must take a great deal of Care and Pains to make them so.

3. Because upon the doing or neglecting of this, the Happiness or Misery of a married Life doth depend. *A good Wife*, says one, *should be like a Mirrour which hath no Image of its own, but receives its Stamp and Image from the Face that looks into it: So should a good Wife*

Wife endeavour to frame her outward Deportment, and her inward Affections, according to her Husband's; to rejoice when he rejoiceth, to be ſad when he mourns, to grieve and be troubled when he is offended and vexed: And would Women thus endeavour to do, they would not only content and pleaſe their Huſbands, but they would thereby open a Way for the obtaining of their Huſbands what they themſelves do will and deſire; ſuch Wives may be ſooner tired in making their Requeſts, than their Huſbands would be in granting them; and their Huſbands would think that they could never do enough to gratify and oblige them: And where Matters are thus carried between Huſband and Wife, the one ſubmiſſive and obedient, the other reſpectful and kind, how happy, how comfortably do they ſpend their Days! But when the Wife ſhall act the Reverſe of this, and, inſtead of being careful to oblige and pleaſe her Huſband, ſhall, upon every little Occaſion, pout and lour, frown and fume, rail at, and wrangle with, her Huſband, making the Houſe too hot to hold him; if the Huſband be of a rugged and reſolute Temper, and will retaliate the Affronts that are offered him, I know no Place in the World ſo like to *Hell* as that Houſe wherein they dwell: But if the Huſband be of a meek and patient Temper, the Carriage and Deportment of ſuch a Wife, tho' it cannot provoke him to vent his Paſſion in ſo ſtormy and tempeſtuous a manner, yet it gives him thoſe inward Wounds of Spirit, as make his Life ſhort and miſerable. *The Contentions of a Wife are a continual Dropping*, ſays the Wiſe Man [*Prov.* ix. 13.] *And* (ſaith Biſhop *Hopkins* on the Place) *it is ſuch a Dropping, as will, at laſt, eat and fret thro' his very Heart, tho' it were made of Stone. One of the beſt Miniſters that ever I knew for Piety, Learning, and Good-nature (famous for learned Tracts) had* (ſaith a late Writer) *an hard Name, becauſe of his Wife's Complaints. He would ſay, all was a little Domeſtick Talk; but that Domeſtick Talk broke his Heart, that before he died he ſaid,* " God hath bleſſed me " with ſome Parts, that I now begin to be uſeful in the " World, and muſt I now go out of the World, thro'

" the Humour of a Woman? And many (ſaith he) die " of the ſame Diſeaſe." All Evils, as Elements, are moſt troubleſome out of their proper Places; as Prophaneneſs in Miniſters, whoſe Work it is to beat it down; Injuſtice in Judges, whoſe Office it is to condemn it; and Diſcomfort in a Wife, who was made to be a Comfort: 'Twas this that gave Riſe to the *Proverb of* Solomon [*Prov.* xxi. 9.] *'Tis better to live in a Corner of a Houſe Top, than with a brawling Woman in a wide Houſe.* 'Tis much more deſirable to live poorly and ſolitarily in the open Air, expoſed to all the Injuries of the Weather; nay to thruſt into a little Corner on the Top of the Houſe, than to have a ſpacious Habitation, and numerous Family, govern'd by a contentious Wife, whoſe perpetual Scolding and Brawling within doors, upon the leaſt Occaſion, is more intolerable than the Thunder and Lightning and bluſtering Winds, which may moleſt him without. *'Tis an Hundred Pities* (ſays Mr. *Swynnock*) *that the Tongues of ſuch Shrews have not as many Bliſters as their Jaws have Teeth, and 'tis never better with their Husbands than when they are hoarſe.* To conclude this Head, whilſt the good Wife, that is careful to oblige her Husband, makes both him and her ſelf happy; the imperious, clamorous and turbulent Wife, that, at every Word, ſpits Paſſion and Poiſon, is a Torment and Vexation to herſelf, and a pernicious Plague to her Huſband.

2. I come now, in the Second Place, to ſhew how, and which way, married Women muſt endeavour to pleaſe their Huſbands.

And here there are three things they ought to do.

1. To Love
2. To Honour } them.
3. To Obey

All which you do ſolemnly covenant and engage before God, Angels and Men, when your Nuptial Rites are perform'd. I have heard ſome Women ſay, indeed, that they never did nor would ſay thoſe Words after the Miniſter; but, I think then, thoſe Miniſters were very remiſs in their Office; and had I been to have officiated, thoſe

thoſe Women ſhould have been content to have ſtay'd for Huſbands till they had been willing to have ſpoken out, *Love*, *Honour*, and *Obey*; which are Duties, the Performance of which is abſolutely neceſſary to maintain both the Honour and Happineſs of a married State, and is the only proper Method that Women can take to pleaſe their Huſbands, as I ſhall ſhew more particularly.

Firſt, Every married Woman, in order to pleaſe her Husband, ought to love him. Let every Woman love her Huſband, as the chiefeſt and beſt for her of ten thouſands, for whoſe ſake ſhe can forget her own People, and her Father's Family; with whoſe Company and Converſe ſhe can be contented and pleaſed, ſhould all the World beſides be annihilated; and tho' even Nature doth teach a Woman to love her Huſband, yet God does alſo enjoin it [*Tit.* ii. iv.] *That they may teach the young Women to be ſober, and to love their Husbands*, &c. *Partly* (ſaith one) *becauſe ſome Women have put off Nature, and are become wild, without natural Affection; and partly, becauſe God would have the Wife's Love to her Husband to proceed not ſo much from an Inſtinct of Nature, as from Obedience to Scripture.* And the Apoſtle confines this Precept to young Women too, thereby ſuggeſting to us, that 'tis the Duty of a Woman, newly married eſpecially, to uſe all Means to endear her Huſband to herſelf, and herſelf to her Huſband; and carefully to avoid all Occaſion of Differences with her Huſband, at her firſt Entrance into that State. Agreeable to which, I remember, *Plutarch*, amongſt his *Conjugal Precepts*, hath this for one, *viz. That it behoves thoſe People that are newly married, to avoid the firſt Occaſion of Diſcord and Diſſention, conſidering, that Veſſels newly formed are ſubject to be bruiſed and put out of Shape, by many ſlight Accidents; but when the Materials come to be ſetled and hardened, by Time, nor Fire, nor Sword will hardly prejudice the ſolid Subſtance.* 'Tis a common fooliſh Practice of young Women, during the Time of Courtſhip, to uſe all the Arts and Methods they can contrive or deviſe, to charm their Lovers, and captivate the Affections of thoſe who make their Addreſſes to them;

you may read, *Come love me* in the Pleaſantneſs of their Looks, in the Neatneſs of their Dreſs, in the Diſcretion of their Words, in the Obligingneſs of their Carriage and Deportment; but they are no ſooner married, but they grow as remiſs and careleſs in their Endeavours to pleaſe their Husbands, as before they were zealous in arting their Charms: Now their pleaſant Smiles are turned into Frowns, the Neatneſs of their Dreſs into Sluttery. She who opened her Mouth with Wiſdom, in whoſe Tongue was the Law of Kindneſs, now ſpeaks unadviſedly with her Lips, and carries herſelf ſo diſreſpectfully towards her Husband, as if ſhe ſtudied how to diſoblige him, and to alienate his Affections from her; by which means, many times, Women make themſelves to become the Wives of Madmen and Sots; whereas, had they been as careful, after their Marriage, to have pleaſed their Huſbands, as they were before, they might have made their Husbands happy, and themſelves too; and had they had that Conjugal Love which they ought to have had, they would have done it; for Love is an Affection that will render Perſons active and diligent to content and pleaſe thoſe who are beloved by them; and when the Wife has ſo much Love for her new Husband, as to make her careful to oblige, and fearful to offend him, in Proceſs of Time ſhe will ſoon engage his Affections to her, as that ſhe may defy the World to alienate them from her. When two Boards are firſt glew'd together, a ſmall matter will looſen them; but if carefully looked to till they are well faſtened, and the Glew be hardened, 'twill not be an eaſy matter to disjoint or ſever them.

Secondly, Married Women, in order to pleaſe their Husbands, ought to honour them. The *Perſian* Ladies have the Reſemblance of a Foot worn on the Top of their Coronets, in Token that the Height of their Glory, Topknot and all, does ſtoop to their Husband's Feet. And here the Honour which is due from the Wife to the Husband is either,

Firſt, Internal, or
Secondly, External.

Firſt,

First, Internal. And this is, when she cherisheth an high Esteem of him in her Mind, when she thinks on him as one whom God hath appointed and ordained to be her Superior and Head. The Apostle [1. *Cor.* xi. 7.] calls the Woman *the Glory of the Man*, and that too, as one thinks, for this Reason, because 'tis an high Honour to him, that so excellent a Creature as a Woman should be his Inferior: Surely then a Woman that harboureth contemptible Thoughts of her Husband is her Husband's Shame and Disgrace; and tho' Women may think that their Thoughts are free, that they are at Liberty to think as they please, yet let them know, that the Heart-searching God takes Cognizance of their Thoughts, and is very much displeased when he finds any to be such as are beneath the Dignity and Excellency of the Husband. If *Michal* despiseth *David* in her Heart, God makes his Curse to fall upon her; and tho' she dishonour her Husband secretly in her Thought, God makes her a publick Example of his Displeasure, by punishing her with Barrenness, which in those Days made a Woman very contemptible: And therefore you find, that when *Elizabeth* had brought forth a Child, she triumphs in it, and says, *God hath taken away my Reproach* [Luke i. 25.] for which some give this Reason: The *Messias* being promised to come of the Race of the *Jews*, every teeming Woman had the Hopes of being the Parent or Pro-parent, at least, of him. But there is,

Secondly, External Honour; which is, when that high Esteem which the Woman hath for her Husband, is expressed or declared either in Words or Actions, giving those Titles which may bespeak the Dignity and Excellency of his Person: So *Sarah* called her Husband Lord, and is commended for it, as being a fit Pattern for other Women to imitate [1. *Pet.* iii. 6.] 'Tis a Custom more common than comely, for Women to call their Husbands by their Christian Names, as our *John*, and our *Thomas*, &c. as if they esteemed them at no higher a Rate than their very Servants that wait upon them; nay, it may be they will call him by reproachful Names, such as Fool, Sloven, Clown, Sot, *&c.* and what they have to say for their

Vindication I know not; but if Words are Thoughts Interpreters, we may ſhrewdly gueſs what it is they aim at. Thoſe Women who will not condeſcend to give their Husbands the Title of Lord and Maſter, it is to be feared, will not ſcruple, in little Time, to uſurp that Authority which that Title doth imply; and the Husband may quickly experience what it is to be under the Diſcipline of the *Apron*. The Woman is obliged to honour her Husband by her Actions; her Deportment and Carriage, in all that ſhe doth, ſhould be ſuch, as may evidence the honourable Opinion ſhe has of him, as her Lord and Head; and truly this will much facilitate the Performance of the next Duty you are bound to, which is,

Thirdly, To obey them: And however light Women may make of this, yet I know not of any Duty, belonging to Men or Women, in the whole Book of God, that is urged with more Vehemency, or preſſed with ſtronger or more cogent Reaſons than this is. Subjection and Obedience to their Husbands is required from Wives, as abſolutely and peremptorily as unto Chriſt himſelf, [*Epheſ.* v. 22.] *Wives, ſubmit unto your Husbands, as unto the Lord;* and is extended to all the Husband's Commands [Ver. 24.] *Therefore, as the Church is ſubject unto Chriſt, ſo ſhould the Wives be to their Huſbands, in every thing.*

Objection. But what if the Husband commands the Wife to do that which is ſinful?

Anſwer. By *every thing*, in the Text, is meant, all that comes within the Compaſs of his Authority to command; and certainly God never gave to any Man Authority to command that which is contradictory to his own Laws; excepting this, or the Impoſſibility of the thing commanded to be done, both God and Nature hath given the Husband Authority to command, and the Wife is bound to obey, however unneceſſary or unfit ſhe may think it to be: *Otherwiſe* (ſays Biſhop *Hopkins*) *when the Apoſtle commands Wives to be ſubject to their Huſbands in every thing, it would ſignify no more than every thing which they think fit.* And this certainly is no greater a Subjection than every Husband will readily yield

yield to his Wife, and falls infinitely ſhort of the Apoſtle's Intent, who requires the Subjection of the Wife to the Husband in every thing, as the Church is ſubject unto Chriſt, which, certainly, is not in every thing ſhe thinks fit; neither ought ſhe to take upon her to judge or reject his Laws, but to fulfil them: And tho' this Duty may ſeem, on the firſt View, to be difficult, yet, in Conjunction with the two former, it will become eaſy and pleaſant. Love your Husbands as you ought, and you will not refuſe to honour them; if you love and honour them, you will not ſcruple to obey them; and if you love, honour and obey them, you will then do what becomes good Wives, and, indeed, what is, or ſhould be, at leaſt, ſufficient to pleaſe your Husbands. And therefore, for a Concluſion of what I have to ſay to you married Women, let this be your *Motto*, and let it be woven with Threads of Gold in the Ornaments of your Heads, *viz.* LOVE, HONOUR, and OBEY, and carry it accordingly, in your Practices, towards your Husbands, and I am perſwaded, that you'll find as great a Scarcity of bad Husbands *then*, as there is of good Wives *now*. I come now to the Improvement of this Doctrine, which invites me to apply my ſelf to you Men, and that too both to the Married and Unmarried.

Firſt, To you that are ſingle and unmarried, you may from this Doctrine learn how great a Friend Religion is to the Comfort and Happineſs of Man in this Life, in the Inſtitution whereof God hath not only wiſely conſulted the Intereſt of his own Honour and Glory, but hath graciouſly condeſcended to adapt its Precepts to the Comfort and Happineſs of Man in every State and Condition of Life; you are now ſingle, but it may be you have Deſigns of altering your Condition by Marriage; and if you do, God hath given ſuch Laws for your Wife to obſerve, as will, if duly regarded, make her an Helpmeet for you; and ſuch a Wife it behoves you to chuſe, if ever you would be happy in that State: If you marry a carnal and graceleſs Wife, void of the Fear of God, ſhe will, perhaps, ſcoff at all that I have ſaid, and will be careful for nothing but to pleaſe her ſelf, and gratify her own

own Inclination; but if you *marry in the Lord*, *i. e.* if you marry a Wife that truly fears God, and lives in an habitual Obedience to his Commands, ſhe will make Conſcience of loving, honouring, and obeying, and be extraordinary careful to pleaſe you in all things.

Secondly, To you who are married: You have heard how great an Obligation is laid on your Wives, to love, honour and obey you, and to endeavour to pleaſe you in all things; remember that their Duty is hard, and the Frailty of that Sex is great, and therefore beware of making their Task more difficult than Neceſſity doth require, or than their Nature will bear; tho', 'tis true, they are in Subjection, yet ſtill remember, they are Part of your ſelves, and therefore let your Authority be united with Love; as your Love muſt be governing Love, ſo let your Commands be loving Commands. In the ſame Chapter, where the Wife is commanded to be ſubject to her Huſband, as the Church is to Chriſt, the Husband alſo is commanded to love his Wife, as Chriſt loved the Church; which one will have to be expreſſed in theſe four Particulars:

Firſt, By bearing with, and pardoning her Weakneſs.

Secondly, By being willing to ſubmit to many Inconveniencies for her ſake.

Thirdly, By interpoſing your ſelf betwixt her and Dangers.

Fourthly, By endeavouring to promote her Spiritual Good and Welfare.

But I muſt forbear Enlargement, leſt that, by overlading the Memories of the Women, I ſhould cauſe them to forget their Duty, which has been ſet before them.

A

WIFE MISTAKEN:

OR,

Leah inſtead of *Rachel.*

A SERMON accuſed for Railing againſt Women, for maintaining Polygamy, many Wives; for calling *Jacob* a *Hocus-Pocus.*

A SERMON laugh'd at more than a Play (by the Ignorant) for many ſuch Miſtakes: Juſtify'd by the Wiſe.

The EPISTLE to the READER.

READER,

THIS Sermon was more diſigured more than David's *Servants were by* Hanun, *when he ſhaved off the one Half of their Beards, and cut off their Garments in the Middle, even to their Buttocks* [2 Sam. x. 4.] *So ſhaved, ſo cut, ſo ridiculouſly mangled was this Sermon, that when I ſaw it, I could not tell whether I ſhould laugh or cry. Thou knoweſt the Learning, Zeal, Patience, Apologies of the Saints have been brought forth by the Heriſies, Vices, Tyrannies, Slanders of the Times; ſo comes out this little Work, ambitious only to be a Saver, which if thy Diſcretion, in judging, will ſtrive to make, I ſhall be thine, or elſe hold thee like one of thoſe who condemned it: But*

Id quod dicere nolo.

GEN. xxix. 25.

And it came to paſs, that in the Morning behold it was Leah. *And he ſaid unto* Laban, *What is this thou haſt done unto me? did not I ſerve with thee for* Rachel? *wherefore then haſt thou beguiled me?*

IN the Text you may obſerve a Conjunction and a Diviſion; a Conjunction, here are two together that ſhould be aſunder, *Jacob* and *Leah; and in the Morning behold it was* Leah. A Diviſion, here are two aſunder that ſhould be together, *Jacob* and *Rachel:* And firſt of the Conjunction, as fitteſt for this Seaſon and Opportunity; you have ſeen the Quality of this Conjunction; it was an ill Conjunction, a great deal of Deceit in it; and where is there a Conjunction, a Marriage, but there is Deceit in it? And leſt this Deceit ſhould cauſe a Separation, the Church bindeth them together, before God and Man, for better for worſe, for richer for poorer. And, unleſs this Courſe were taken, how ſoon would there be a Partition? their Qualities being almoſt as different as Heaven and Hell, as the good Angels and the bad. *Nabal* and *Abigal*, *Nabal* a Fool and Churl, and of ſo baſe a Diſpoſition, ſuch a Man of *Belial*, that his own Servants ſaid, *a Man could not tell how to ſpeak to him;* and ſhe a kind complemental Woman; ſhe fell at *David*'s Feet, and offered to waſh the Feet of his Servants. *David* and *Michal*, *Michal* a ſcoffing Woman, deriding *David* for dancing before the *Ark;* and he a *Man after God's own Heart*. *Socrates* with *Xantippe*, ſhe is like a *Quotidian Ague;* or, at the beſt, ſhe is like *Saul*'s Evil-Spirit, that comes too often upon him. *Moſes* and *Zepporah*, ſhe a terrible fiery Woman, *Thou art a bloody Husband to me*, ſaith ſhe; and *Moſes* the meekeſt Man above all the Men of the Earth. The Learned diſtinguiſh a four-fold Deceit in Marriage; the firſt is *error perſonæ*, when *Leah* is given inſtead of *Rachel;* one Party for another, as to *Jacob;* and this Miſtake doth hinder and nullify Mar-

Marriage: For in Marriage there is a mutual Love and Conſent one to another; but this is not where *Leah* is given inſtead of *Rachel*, and therefore no Marriage. But, will ſome ſay, is it poſſible that *Jacob* (who was ſo ſubtle a Man) ſhould be ſo deceived; he was noted for a Supplanter, by his Brother *Eſau*: *Is he not rightly called* Jacob? *for he hath ſupplanted me theſe two times of my Birth-right and Bleſſing*. He was ſo grave, ſo arch a Supplanter, that he could deceive his Father, altho' his Voice betray'd him, and altho' his Father told him, it was the Voice of *Jacob*, yet he preſſed him to bleſs him inſtead of his Brother *Eſau*. We ſay that Man is an excellent *Hocus-Pocus*, excellent in *Legerdemain*, and Slight of Hand, that can deceive one that looks upon him; but he that can deceive the Hearing and the Feeling, he is far more excellent: My Sight may be deceived, for I may take that which is pictured to be lively and real, but my Hearing, my Feeling cannot be ſo eaſily deceived. *Thomas* would not believe his Seeing, his Hearing, but, when he came to Feeling, to lay his Hand in our Saviour's Side, then he cry'd out, *my Lord and my God*. And now I ſuppoſe you are ready to ask, how this ſubtle Man was deceived? The Deceit was thus, *ſolent olim ſponſæ obvelata facie traduci ad torum mortalem pudoris cauſa*: In thoſe Days the Brides came veiled and masked to their Marriage-Beds, for Modeſty ſake; and it was a Sign of Modeſty to be ſilent. And thus much for the firſt Deceit, which is *error perſonæ*, a Miſtake of the Perſon, as this Text repreſents to you. There is another Deceit, which is *error qualitatis*, when a Man takes, as he thinks he hath, one thrifty, honeſt Fair, and ſhe proves a painted, whoriſh, liquoriſh Slut. And this Deceit is general; for many Women ſhew, like the *Egyptian* Temples, very beautiful without, and built and adorn'd with precious Stones, ſaith *Lucian*, but if you ſeek what God they worſhip within, you ſhall find him to be a Cat, or a Goat, or an Ape, or ſome ſuch ridiculous, ill-favoured Creature. So many Women, although they be fair and beautiful without, are full of many Vanities, fickle, unconſtant, laſcivious Affections. Many a Man

Man thinks he hath a Saint, when he hath a Devil; a fair Woman, when ſhe is a painted, plaiſter'd-fac'd *Jezabel*: I will not ſpeak of theſe painted Tombs and Sepulchres, beautiful without, but loathſome within; theſe Apples of *Sodom*, that ſeem fair to the Sight, but, at the leaſt Touch, they fall to Duſt: So the leaſt Approaching diſcovers the Corruption of theſe Creatures; ſo great is their Corruption, it corrupts the ſweeteſt Perfumes, and makes them loathſome as themſelves: But I will not rake any longer in this unſavoury Dunghill. There are two other Errors or Deceits in Marriage, as *error conditionis*, and *error fortunæ*; but I let them paſs for fear I ſhould run into the Error of being too tedious to this Aſſembly. I come now to the Diviſion or Separation. There is Diſcovery of an ill Conjunction, therefore I will caſt my Meditations a little upon this Appearance or Diſcovery of this Conjunction; *in the Morning behold it was* Leah. There is many a Man ſleeps with *Leah*, and thinks it is *Rachel*; there is many a Man ſo blind in his Love and Affection, that he is as much or more miſtaken in the Qualities of his Wife, than *Jacob* was in the Perſon of *Leah*. Many a Man thinks he hath a Wife that loves him, when ſhe cares not for him; and he may think, that ſhe is ſighing and ſorrowing in his Abſence, when ſhe is revelling and dancing. You may read [*Prov.* vii. 18.] there's a Woman ſpeaks to a Man, in her Husband's Abſence, to take his *Fill of Love* with her: He (may be) thinks ſhe is weeping, in his Abſence, when ſhe is tumbling in her perfumed Bed, as you may read there [Ver. 17.] *I have perfumed my Bed with Myrrh, Aloes, and Cinnamon; I have decked it with Coverings of Tapeſtry and fine Linnen of* Egypt. No Queſtion this Woman embraces her Huſband, when he comes home, and he diſcovers nothing: For *the Way of an whoriſh Woman*, as *Solomon* ſaith, *is like the Flight of a Bird in the Air, like the Paſſage of a Ship upon the Sea, like a Serpent creeping into a Rock:* No Sign of the Bird's Flying, of the Serpent's Creeping, of the Ship's Paſſage.

Look

Look upon *Joſeph*'s Miſtreſs, ſhe hath his Coat to ſhew for Honeſty; *Ecce ſignum*, *Behold the Coat of this Hebrew.* Did *Sampſon* think thoſe Hands would have clipp'd his Locks, that had ſo often embraced his Body? Some raſh Men do maintain, that the Reaſon why Men think there are ſo many good Women is, becauſe they are ſo blind and ignorant themſelves; if they had but the Eyes of the Wiſe to ſee with, *Solomon*'s Eyes, may be they would ſay, *There was not one good of a Thouſand;* and he had told them one by one. And how does *Solomon* define a good Woman? Juſt as the Philoſopher does, *Vacuum ex ſuppoſito quod detur;* if there be a *Vacuum*, it is *Locus non repletus corpore:* If there be, or ſhall ever be ſuch a thing in the World as a good Woman, then ſhe is this and that, *ſhe is like a Merchant's Ship, that bringeth her Food from far;* and what of greater Value! *She is like to pecious Jewels*, ſhe is like to them, but there is none like to her, none of equal Value with her. *Solomon* ſaith, *ſhe is a Crown to her Husband*; *ſhe is the Glory of her Husband*, ſaith St. *Paul;* the very Scarlet ſhe cloaths her Servants in does ſhew her honourable; God himſelf calls her an Helper, and ſuch a Helper ſhe is, that Man could not have been capable of that Bleſſing, *Increaſe and multiply*, without her; then it was *The Seed of the Woman that brake the Serpent's Head:* She was *Deipara*, ſhe brought forth a God; and here I will be bold to ſay, out of the due Honour to that Sex, that there have been Women have deſerved theſe Praiſes of *Solomon:* What was that *Eſther?* that Cherubim of the Church, under whoſe Wing it was ſafe. The Papiſts call the Virgin *Mary*, *Regina Cœli*, Queen of Heaven; and they pray to her to command our Saviour, *Mater, impera Filio*, Mother, command thy Son. She hath more Churches dedicated to her than our Saviour, than all the Trinity, altho' ſhe paid her Fine in Milk, but he in Blood (as a great Divine ſaith.) How happy hath this Kingdom been under a Queen! there are many Eyes now living that have ſeen it, and not a Man but knows it; I need not inſtance, in Particulars, the Elect Lady and her Siſter, to whom St. *John*

writ; *Priſcilla*, able to inform a learned Man, *Apollos*, in the Scripture: Theſe Women were highly honoured by that Apoſtle called from Heaven, *Greet* Priſcilla *and* Aquila [Rom. xvi. 3.] Aquila *and* Priſcilla *ſalute you* [1 Cor. xvi. 19.] *Salute* Priſcilla *and* Aquila [2 Tim. iv. 19.] Priſcilla *went with him into* Syria [*Acts* xviii. 18.] And thus much for the Diſcovery; how long may a Man ſleep, before he knows with whom, or what ſhe is he ſleeps withal! before he knows whether it be with *Leah* or *Rachel!* I am come now to the Diviſion or Separation, and you ſee it is a high and great Diviſion; *Jacob* begins to word it, to fall to Terms with *Laban* (who was his Maſter) *What is this thou haſt done unto me? Did not I ſerve with thee for* Rachel? *Wherefore then haſt thou beguiled me?* And, indeed, the Inconveniencies were very many that befel *Jacob* by this wicked Act of *Laban:* Firſt of all, he made his Daughter a Whore, and a Whore is odious to the Children of God; ſhe was either to be burnt or to be ſtoned. Then the Wrong done to *Rachel*, being deceived of her Expectation, was enough to make her weep herſelf blear-ey'd, like *Leah;* then he brought an Inconvenience upon *Jacob*, having more Wives than one; ſome ſay it was a Sin; ſome hold it a great Inconvenience to have one, therefore much more to have two.

The married Man is intangled like a Fiſh in a Net; he comes merrily in, but he is mightily perplexed when he cannot get out. Then this Action of *Laban*'s was enough to ſet the Siſters at Variance; and what Joy could *Jacob* have when his Wives were divided? it was enough to divide his Heart. Then the Deſire of Rule, and Jealouſies and Diſtruſts that one hath of the other; then the Charges to maintain two; whereas *Jacob*, if he had had but one, he would never have ſought further. God made but one for *Adam*, and *Lamech* was the firſt that had two Wives, and he had no more than two; and he was of the Poſterity of *Cain*, and condemned by the Fathers; and from *Adam* to *Abraham* none of the Poſterity of *Seth* had more than one Wife (that we read of.) *They two ſhall be one Fleſh*, and how can that be, if a Man have many Wives? God made only Male and Female, and he took

took but one Rib, and made, of one Rib, one Woman, not many. I will not ſay it was a Sin to have many Wives, for I find it in the Law [*Deut.* xxi. 15.] *If a Man have two Wives, one that he loveth, and another that he hateth*; and there the Law ſpeaks of both their Sons as legitimate [*Deut.* xvii. 17.] the Law does forbid the King to have many Wives, which may draw away his Mind; and Saint *Auguſtine* (upon that Place) ſaith, *permiſſum & Regi habere plures uxores, non plurimas*, he may have more than one or two, but not many; and *Jehoiada*, that was a moſt holy Prieſt, took two Wives for King *Joaſh* [2 *Chron.* xxiv. 3.] but methinks I hear ſome ſay, *Laban* is unjuſtly condemned for dealing ſo ſtrictly with *Jacob;* was it not a great Kindneſs in *Laban* to take *Jacob*, *Jacob* that had cozened his Father, his Brother, and to truſt him with his Flock? and then it was a Kindneſs that he gave him his Daughter, and, for aught I know, the better of the two; the faireſt is not always the beſt: Beautiful *Rachel* ſold *Jacob* for Mandrakes, whereas blear-ey'd *Leah* bought him, and *went out to meet him* [Gen. xxx. 16.] Tender-eyed *Leah* will be weeping at my Misfortunes, when beautiful *Rachel* will be laughing with another. *Abraham* went in Danger with beautiful *Sarah*, but *Jacob* liv'd ſecure with tender-eyed *Leah; Rachel* ſtole her Father's Gods, and could ſee her Father and Husband quarrel the while, when *Leah* was continually weeping; *Rachel* will be impatient, if ſhe have not what ſhe deſires; *give me Children, or elſe I die;* and what is Beauty with ſuch Diſquietneſs! but like a fair Houſe haunted with Spirits, or a Bed of Violets with a Serpent; but look upon *Leah*, ſhe is more moderate, tender-eyed; ſhe will be weeping inſtead of ſcolding; *Rachel* will be ſubject to be wandering, like *Dina; Leah* is tender-eyed, and the Wind will hurt her; *veniunt ſpectentur ut ipſæ*, they delight to be looked upon; what are theſe many pretty Fancies in their Dreſſings, but ſo many Signs to invite a Man to inn there if he pleaſe? whereas the Paſſenger elſe had gone on his Way; what does the Fowler whiſtle for, but to catch the Bird? and ſuch is the End of their Enchantments. Thus you ſee

the Danger of Beauty; there is more Danger in it than in the moſt unruly Elements; the Fire hath no Power of a Man, if he do not touch it, nor the Water; but if a Man look upon Beauty, it will endanger him; and it is kept with a great deal of Danger and Care, as the Apples of the *Heſperides* with a watchful Dragon. But, will ſome ſay, why do you maintain blear-eyed *Leah* againſt beautiful *Rachel*? *Leah*'s Fault was great in lying with *Jacob*. To this I anſwer, Fornication was held no Sin amongſt the *Gentiles*; and the Church of *Rome* holds *fornicationem non vagam*, that if a Man keep conſtantly to one Woman, it is no Sin: And here let no Man be harſh againſt *Leah*, for ſhe is tender-eyed, and can weep Tears enough to waſh away her Sin, Tears enough to waſh our Saviour's Feet; alas! be not too harſh againſt her, ſhe is blear-eyed already, and too much Weeping will make her blind; what if *Leah* have a Blemiſh in the Eye of her Body? yet her Underſtanding, the Eye of her Soul may be clear and beautiful; and if Men conſider rightly, the greateſt Deformity and Blemiſh in a Woman is, to be blear-eyed in her Underſtanding, and to miſtake a Man's Actions, not to ſee them clearly; if her Husband be ſociable, then he is given to Drunkenneſs; if ſilent, then he hath no Diſcourſe in him; if merry, not that Gravity that becomes him; if he put not himſelf upon hard Adventures, to raiſe his Fortunes, ſhe is diſquieted; and if he do, and be foiled, then ſhe contemns him: Give me the Eyes of the Underſtanding; let the other Eye be as clear as Chryſtal, if this be blemiſh'd, there is no Joy. For aught I know, this *Laban*, this Idolater, ſhall riſe up againſt many Chriſtians: How uſual is it for many a Man to make fair Promiſes, to promiſe a Man *Rachel*! he ſhall have this and that, and any thing his Heart can deſire, if he will ſerve them; but when a Man hath done all he can, they will put *Leah* upon him, ſome blear-eyed unhandſome thing; upon which, as ſoon as a Man can but look, he ſhall find it to be *Leah*; it's plain enough to be ſeen, *behold it was* Leah! It is a hard thing for a Man to get a *Rachel* of his Maſter; to get any thing that hath any Delight or Pleaſure in it; great Men will not

part

part with their *Rachels*. And ſtill I ſay, this *Laban* had more Honeſty and Goodneſs than many a Chriſtian; for, altho' he had done *Jacob* a little Wrong, yet he had ſo much Mildneſs, and Gentleneſs, and Gentility, as he did ſuffer *Jacob* to ſpeak to him, and to tell him of it; why *haſt thou beguiled me* thus? Now there are rich Men, if they have done a Man a Diſpleaſure, will not be told of it; nay, if a poor Man truſt a rich Man with Money, if he be not diſpoſed to give it, or is unwilling, will be angry if the poor Man ask it, and do him all the Miſchief that may be: And what is this, but like Thieves that do not only rob a Man, but bind a Man too, and gag him, that he may not ſpeak; or like Rogues that murther a Man becauſe he ſhall not betray them. God ſend me to deal with *Laban*, with an Idolater; I ſhall find a Man that I dare ſpeak to, I ſhall find a Mate that will give me *Leah*, that will give me ſomething, and not cozen me of all.

God complained of his Vineyard, that, when he had taken a great deal of Pains with it, *it brought forth wild Grapes; ecce Labruſcus*, behold wild Grapes plain enough to be ſeen. And here if I ſhould ſhew to the World, with an *Ecce*, the wild Grapes, the baſeſt Actions of Men, I make no Queſtion but that Men would paſs the ſame Judgment that *David* did upon the rich Man that took the poor Man's Lamb. And here let every Man be exhorted not to deceive his Servant, or his Kinſman, or his Friend. *Jacob*, for deceiving his Brother and his Father, was paid in his own Coin, and enjoyed not the Bleſſing Twenty Years after: *Laban* deceived him in his Wife: *Laban*, for deceiving *Jacob*, was deceived by *Jacob*, with the Rods he laid. *Rachel* ſtole *Laban's* Gods for deceiving her of her Huſband at firſt. *Jacob* deceived his Father with Goats Skins, and he *himſelf was deceived with the Blood of a Goat* [Gen. xxxvii.] *David* cut off the Lap of *Saul's* Coat, and his Clothes would not keep him warm in his old Age. *Sampſon's* Eye luſted after a Philiſtine, and *Sampſon's* Eye was put out. *Jereboam's* Hand reached to the Prophet, and that Hand withered. Thus you ſee how God puniſheth Sin in the

ſame Act, in the ſame Part, in the ſame Kind. Time will not give me Leave here to ſhew you how many a Man ſleeps with *Leah*, with ſome ugly deformed Sin, and, being blinded in Sin and Darkneſs, thinks it is *Rachel* (very beautiful) and loves it entirely, till the Morning Light of Gods Grace ariſe, and then he ſees the Deformity of his Sin, how blear-eyed it is, how ill-favour'd; and now let every Man conſider how we are all Servants to God, and we ſerve him for *Rachel*, for ſome pleaſant Thing we delight in, as the Apoſtles dreamt of a Kingdom; if it pleaſe God to give us *Leah* inſtead of *Rachel*, to give us that which pleaſeth us not ſo well, let us be contented with it, and ſerve him on ſtill, he will, at the laſt give us *Rachel*; we ſhall be married to him in whom are all Joys, ſuch as *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive.* To which God of his Mercy bring us. To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, be all Honour, *&c.*

THE

THE VIRGIN MARY:

A SERMON Preached in St. *Mary's* College (Vulgò *New-College*) *Oxon*, *March* 15. 1641.

LUKE i. 26, 27.

And in the ſixth Month the Angel Gabriel *was ſent from God, unto a City of* Galilee, *named* Nazareth, *to a Virgin eſpouſed to a Man whoſe Name was* Joſeph, *of the Houſe of* David; *and the Virgin's Name was* Mary.

WE ſee what Time of the Year it is; and we underſtand the Buſineſs of the Day, to celebrate a Feaſt. A Feaſt in *Lent* may ſeem not ſo proper; for how ſhall Joy ſhew herſelf in the Houſe of Mourning? or Fulneſs in the Kingdom of Hunger? Who ſets Diſhes of Meat upon a Grave? Yet ſo are *Dainties to a Mouth ſhut up*, ſaith the Wiſe Man. And the Church hath ſhut our Mouths for theſe Forty Days; ſo ſhut them up, that of old ſhe permitted them not to be opened by theſe triumphant Rites, which otherwiſe enlarged then all Mouths and Hearts, the Anniverſary-Days of Martyrs. *Non licet in Quadrageſima Natalitia Martyrum celebrare*: Canon-Law, Cauſ. 34. *at non licet*. If the Memory of thoſe glorious Saints could not juſtify πανηγύρεις ἀνδριαντικὰς, as *Nazianzen* calls them, thoſe Spiritual Games, and merry Meetings, far

far more holy and devout (God knows) than all Fasts of ours be; certainly the Riot of our Tables at those solemn sad Times, will not be excused, neither by the Itch of a wanton Palate (that I may say no worse) nor by the Pretensions of a precise, left-handed Conscience, that thinks no Time so fit to make a full Meal, as when the Church commands Abstinence. And yet it seems, she that in *Lent* prohibited Festivals of Martyrs, thought good to establish This, which we now solemnize: And she had Reason. First, Because, even in *Lent*, *Sunday* was always excepted; no Fasting on the Lord's Day; and this is the Day of the Lord. 'Tis true, he is content, in Honour of his Mother, it be called *Our Lady-Day*; and it should not discontent us: But it is, indeed, *Our Lord's*, the Day of his Incarnation. Again, the Nativity was never fasted; and the Incarnation needs not to give Place to the Nativity; for that it was more miraculous that God should become Flesh, than that That Flesh, after Nine Months, should be born: A greater Step from Heaven to Earth, than from the Virgin's Womb to the Manger. At *Christmas*, he did but change Rooms: He came into the World to Day. Say we then with the Psalmist, *This is the Day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it:* Yea, which is more, say we, *This is the Day which hath made the Lord:* But then let the Gladness be like the Day; a holy Day, a holy Gladness; our Joy such as usher'd Christ into the World, a χαῖρε with a κεχαριτωμένη, well becoming a Virgin to entertain. For on this Message *the Angel* Gabriel *was sent to a Virgin*, &c.

Our Parts will be, as the Persons, two; the Angel and the Virgin: And we shall consider them jointly and then severally. First jointly, the Angel and the Virgin: We do not find, in the Old Testament, much Conversation Between Angels and this Sex; and, when they did meet, the Conjunction was not very auspicious; for neither have the Angels been always good, nor the Women still Virgins. In the third of *Genesis*, our Mother *Eve* is at Parly with the Devil; and in the seventh, Angels (for so we do expound that Place) are making Love to the Daugh-

Daughters of Men; and the Iſſues of both theſe Interviews are too ſad to be forgotten: The former brought in Sin, and that led in Death; the latter begat the Giants, and that drew down a Deluge. Tho' it be an Honour to converſe with Angels, yet the Angel and the Woman may be unhappily met. A high Place and honourable Employment is not always ſucceſsful, eſpecially if it encounter Minds weak and feminine: For ſome, like a too warm Sun it melts; they ſink down and ſpread into a waxen, eaſy Popularity: Some, like thine, it hardens; they grow rough and intractable: There be whom it ſets a boiling, making them the Mother of Giant-like Deſigns, the Troubles and Diſtempers of the World; and there be whom, like *Eve*, it perſwades, they ſhall not die, and they ſhall be Gods, no Gods beſide them, and none greater. And all this Honour may do, when it comes as a good Angel, ſent from God, like him in our Text: What Miſchief then may he work, when we ourſelves, by forbidden Arts, call and conjure it up? So then, there is but little Comfort to ſee the Angel and the Woman together: Let us proceed and view them ſingle.

We begin with the Virgin, and behold her but in her *Perigæum*, her Humility: For in the oppoſite Part, her Exaltation, ſhe will be too high for our Sight. Her Degrees, in this lower Part of her Orb, are prickt out in the Text, thus: A Virgin ſuppoſeth a Woman. 1. Then a Woman. 2. A Virgin. 3. Eſpouſed. 4. To *Joſeph* a Carpenter. 5. Of the Houſe of *David*. 6. Her Name *Mary*. 7. Her Habitation, *Nazareth* of *Galilee*. And all theſe I take for ſo many ſucceſſive Degrees of Humiliation, ſuch yet as the Degrees or Rounds of *Jacob*'s Ladder, with an Angel at every one, and à κεχαριτωμένη ſhining from above upon every Step. Woman, the firſt Step.

1. We muſt crave leave of the Sex to ſay of them as the Scripture ſays, They are a Degree below Man. Firſt, in the Creation, not only that Woman was made for Man (He therefore her End and Perfection, and ſo more noble) but that Man was framed immediately to the Likeneſs of God, ſhe to Man's; and ſo is but the Image of

of an Image; a Copy, no Original; a Ray at ſecond Reflection; and ſo more weak. Secondly, in the Fall; and there ſhe Principal. Of the Woman, ſaith *Siracides*, came the Beginning of Sin, and thro' her we all die; all at once, by the general *morte morieris*, and all ſeverally, by the particular Occaſions and Temptations. All die, die by being born of her; for this Life is a very Death: And die by concurring with her for Poſterity; for we do not give Life to our Children, but leave it. Thus much we may ſay honourably of her, *honouring her as the weaker Veſſel*, ſaith St. *Peter*: Then to take ſome Notice of Weakneſs in Women, is ſome Honour to them. For I ſtand not here to juſtify Malice, or to glean up the Wit that in in all times hath been caſt away in Paſquils and Declamations againſt Women; wherein, commonly, thoſe Men have been the forwardeſt Accuſers of their Faults who have been the chiefeſt Authors of them. We are all *Adam*'s Sons, and we have it of our Father, *The Woman deceived me*, even the Woman *which thou gaveſt*; the lawful Wife, God's Gift; much more the Strange Woman, the Gift of the Devil. We accuſe their Faces for our Dotage, their Inconſtancy for our fooliſh Credulity, their Pride for our Flatteries. Shall they anſwer for their own Vices and ours too? Nay, their Vertues are traduc'd. Are they free and debonair? We call them wanton. Are they reſerv'd? We call them ſullen. Their Meekneſs gives them the Name of Sheep, and their Spirit of Shrews. We ſuſpect their Wiſdom, we ſcorn their Simplicity, and their Learning we hate. Laden thus with true Infirmities and falſe Accuſations, are they ſunk below God's Protection? Nay, they are in his Favour; ſaith the Angel, *Thou haſt found Favour*; ſuch a Favour as no Angel ever found. For he *took not the Nature of Angels*, he did of Women: We look high in all our Works, look for Bravery rather than Convenience. God, in his Actions, made Choice, not of the nobleſt Means, but of the fitteſt; and what more fit than that; as by a Woman came Death, ſo by a Woman ſhould come the Redemption from Death: And, as Chriſt came into the World to teach Humility, ſo he ſhould enter at this loweſt, Woman, our firſt Step.

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2. The ſecond is Virgin, one Degree below Woman. Below a Woman! What! Do we cry down, then, the Single-bed? Do we pull the Coronets of Glory from the Heads of thoſe Maiden-Saints, whom the Church hath conſecrated and commended to us? We dare not do ſo. It is confeſt, as the preſent Condition of the World now ſtands, Virginity, as it deſerves Admiration for its Difficulties, ſo hath infinite Prerogatives over the Eſtate of Wife and Mother: But from the Beginning it was not ſo; nor as long as Man remember'd the right Uſe of every Creature, and could apply himſelf to the Enjoyment thereof, without ſlacking his due Dependance on his God. Not to repeat the Laws and Cuſtoms of almoſt all Civil Nations; the Shames and Penalties, not only of a ſingle Life, but of late Marriage, is touched by our excellent *Selden* in his lateſt Work, *lib.* 5. *c.* 3. So then, in the beſt Judgments, Virgin is below Woman. A Cypher bears no Proportion with a Number, and Virgin is a very Cypher in Nature; it hath no Being nor Name: God made it not; for the Law to his Creature was, *Creſcite & multiplicamini;* and the Contradiction to this conſtitutes the Form of a Virgin. Then, for a Name, *Adam* himſelf had been at a Nonplus; *Iſhah* would not ſerve for it, that hath Man in it; and *Havah* it could not be, for that is, *Mater viventium.* Was ſhe not juſtly called, *Almah*, *i.e.* in the *Helleniſt*'s Language, *Apocrypha;* a Piece of *Apocrypha*, we cannot tell what, nor whence. Now in this Cypher to lodge all Number (for firſt and laſt is all Number, and ſo is Chriſt) [*Rev.* 1.] In this Emptineſs, to couch him in whom all Fulneſs dwells; out of this *Apocrypha* to produce not the canonical, but the eſſential Word, was a Task worthy of that Hand which called Light out of Darkneſs, and this All out of Nothing. God doth not always take ſuch Ways as we think moſt direct to his Ends: He might have ſpoken himſelf to *Balaam*, but he made the Aſs to do it; the Emblem and Proverb of Dulneſs to tutor the Prophet. He might have poſed the Magicians and Philoſophers by producing a Lion or Elephant; he did it by the leaſt of Creatures, and the ſooneſt generated, certainly, many times, moſt familiar with

with Philoſophers. In our Redemption, what mas more unlikely than to raiſe and quicken us by Death? Do not confine God's Power and Goodneſs to the narrow Sphere of thy Underſtanding. Thou knoweſt not the utmoſt Extent of Nature or Art. In Nature thou daily ſeeſt contrary Effects proceeding from the ſame Cauſes, and the ſame Effects from Cauſes that are contrary; and by Art, thou art confident, thou can'ſt frame an Inſtrument, which, charged with thy vital Air only, ſhall kill; and that there may be a Burning-Glaſs made of a Piece of Ice. Do not doubt it then, if the Angel ſaith it, ſhe ſhall be a Mother, tho' a Virgin: This was our ſecond Step.

3. The third is, *eſpouſed*. Eſpouſed! That's ſomewhat lower yet. It is indeed the Way, *via Regia*, God's, and the King's High-way from Maid to Wife, but is neither; and therefore inferior to both. For all Motion is leſs perfect than its Terms. The Virgin ſtands like a blooming Roſe in the midſt of a Garden, and draws all Eyes to hers; the Wife is the Roſe gathered, and bound in a Garland for the Huſband's Head; but the Spouſe is as the ſame Flower drawn in at a Window, and not yet cropt from the Buſh, ſuffering, at once, the Confinement of a Wife, and the Solitarineſs of a Maid: She hath foregone the Liberty of the one, and not attained the Privileges of the other; having exchanged Certainties for Hopes; for *ſponſalia* are but *ſpes nuptiarum*, ſaith the Civilian. Yet the eſpouſed finds Favour with God, and we accept the vulgar Note, Chriſt being born of this ἀμφίβολον, this Participle, half Maid, half Wife, meant thereby to ſanctify to us the Conditions of both; tho' perhaps he would intimate alſo, that, in things of this Life, as Marriage or the like, he approves of that Temper that ſteers a middle Courſe, neither wholly declining the World, nor embracing it too greedily, as if we were wedded to it; ſince the continual cloſe graſping of human Buſineſs makes us loſe our Hold of God; and the utter abandoning of all, is to deſert our Station here, and, as much as in us lies, to uncreate the Creation. There is a far Diſtance between the mere Politick, who breathes

breathes nothing but Intelligence, and Inſtructions, and Accommodations, and State Intereſt; and the Solitary Man in the Pillar. That is the true Complexion, which the Apoſtle requires, Tthat *they which have Wives, be as they which have none*; and they which have Husbands likewiſe: Which was the Condition of the Bleſſed Virgin in the third Step, *eſpouſed*.

4. The fourth is, to *Joſeph*, a Carpenter. Still we deſcend. Had ſhe been of the Prieſt's Kindred, and no more, and lived ſomewhere elſe, peradventure a Carpenter might have paſt for a fair Match; but, being of the Race of Kings too, for by her Chriſt claims to be *David*'s Son; and among that People, which ever held the Perſons of their Kings and Prieſts moſt ſacred and ſublime, there it muſt ſeem no ſmall Diſparagement to accept a Spouſe, whoſe Living lies in his Fingers Ends, a Mechanick, a Mercenary; nay, a Profeſſion ſo vile, that *Plato* forbids it to the Natives of his Commonweal; and *Ariſtotle*, where he allows Muſick and Painting, as Qualities fit for a Gentleman, ſo far forth as to judge of a Piece in either kind, prohibits yet the Practice of them, as abaſing Mens Minds, and rendering them unfit for great Actions. And indeed, among the Ancient Patriarchs, we find Husbandmen and Shepherds, but no Artificers. So then, that a Virgin ſo high-born ſhould ſtoop to a Carpenter, is very low; yet the next Step leads us lower.

5. *De domo David.* It is much for ſuch Inequality to meet under the ſame Roof: How if it concur in the ſame Perſon? *Joſeph* of the Loins of King *David*, and yet a Carpenter. *Miſerum eſt fuiſſe*; a great Heart-breaking, to ſee the Pomp and Plenty of his Anceſtors changed to ſuch Punery, that he is fain to ſet himſelf to Hire, to earn his daily bread; to find the Palace, as with the turning of a Scene, vaniſh'd into a Cottage; and in his Hand an Axe inſtead of a Scepter: In the mean while, to ſee *Herod* on the Throne; a Foreigner, a Vagabond, toſs'd by Fortune from *Aſcalon* to *Edom*, and from *Edom* to *Judæa*; where having, beyond Hope, gotten the Crown on his Head, he cements it there with the Blood of the right Heirs. And after all this, to have a Spouſe, who

when ſhe ſhould comfort him, cannot, having the ſame Cauſe of Grief herſelf; nay, who adds one further Degree to both their Sorrows by her very Name, our ſixth Step.

6. The Virgin's Name *Mary*: That is, Queen or Lady: For ſo I am told it ſignifies in the *Syriac*. This *nominis onus* makes all the reſt more heavy and preſſing; they might elſe, perhaps, by little and little, have worn out the Memory of their high Extraction, and, like an ordinary Couple, lived and died together quietly among their Neighbours in *Nazareth*. But now, *Mary*, like a perpetual Watch-word in their Ears, keeps their Remembrance waking. The Huſband cannot call the Wife by her Name, but, inſtantly, that preſents to their ſad Souls, both what they are now, and from what they are fallen; beſides the Scorn of ſcurrilous Wits, who would think it an excellent Occaſion for a Libel, that a Carpenter's Wife ſhould be called a Lady. But, for all this, *Fear not*, Mary; Εὕρες γὰρ χάριν, ſaith the Angel. She ſtands now in the Preſence of God, and to his Sight there is no Difference between a Carpenter and a King; both equally diſtant from God: A Million is no nearer to Infinite, than an Unite. There is a δίκαιος ὤν, [*Mat.* 1.] the being an honeſt Man, that makes the Carpenter a great Perſonage; and this Virgin takes it for a great Fortune. She ſhall not chuſe for us: We muſt have Heirs, Heirs ſometimes of more Vices, more Curſes than Lordſhips; yet we think our Children well beſtow'd: Which is to bid *Pluto* to the Wedding, and ſhut Chriſt out of Doors. The Virgin is content with the honeſt Carpenter, and he alſo comforts himſelf. The Houſe of *David* is not fallen much lower than its Original: It began in a Shepherd, and ſhould it diſdain an Artificer? Shall the Sheep-hook ſay to the Hammer, Thou art not Noble. It is the Faſhion, indeed, of Men raiſed from low Fortune and Birth, to ſtudy the Art of Forgetfulneſs, and, like the Pinnacles of their new-built Houſes, to look with Scorn on the Ground that bears them. But we ſee here *Joſeph* not of this Humour; who, beſides his Humility, was ſo wiſe, and charitable to boot, that, I believe, he look'd

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on *Herod* himſelf with more Pity than Indignation; as on a Man, undone by Preferment, curs'd with a Crown that muſt be maintain'd with ſo much Miſchief. As for his Trade; let him glory herein: That Generation was to ſee the World new moulded, by Tradeſmen, Fiſhers, and Tent-makers, being ſent out by a Carpenter, the ſuppoſed Son of this *Joſeph*, to conquer Kings, to diſpute with Philoſophers, to teach the *Greek* Learning, and the *Jew* Law; to ordain Religion, and reform Manners; to command Nature; to converſe with Angels, and pull down Satan from his Throne. Then ſhall the Virgin the Carpenter's Spouſe rejoice, and in her Name many ſhall read a large Prophecy: For, as *all Generations ſhall call her bleſſed*, ſo all Generations ſhall call her *Lady*. If ſhe look forth, ſhe ſhall ſee the ſtately Piles of Churches and Colleges dedicated to God in Memory of her; Orders of Monks and Knights praying and fighting under her Title; her Praiſe ſung in Hymns and Anthems; her Attributes of Honour digeſted into Alphabets; more, much more, 'till (as at the Erecting of the Tabernacle) the Offerings flow'd in ſo faſt, that there needed a Proclamation, *Nec Vir, nec Mulier, offerat ultra*. And in Heaven, if ſhe look about, ſhe ſhall behold Legions of Angels and of bleſſed Souls, bowing themſelves at the Feet of her Son; in the Glory of whoſe exalted Body ſhe doth not only, like others, ſee a Type of her own, but her own Body already glorified, for his Body is hers, and ſhe may as truly ſay of him, *This is Bone of my Bone, and Fleſh of my Fleſh*, as *Adam* could of *Eve*. May not we then, who call Chriſt *Lord*, call his Mother *Lady*? We may, ſo we make it a Title of Honour, not of Worſhip; a Note of Eminency, not of Authority. It is true, ſome have gone too far: Do not not thou therefore fall ſhort. Wilt thou be prophane, becauſe thou haſt been ſuperſtitious? Why ſhouldſt thou think thou canſt not value her too low, whom God ſo highly regarded? For it was wittily noted, and truly, by him who ſaid, *God did offer her as much as he could do*; that is, more than he did for all the World beſide; for he could have made the World greater than it is, and all things in it greater than they are; but her he could

not make a greater Mother than ſhe is; the Θεοτόκον, the Ancients call her, the Mother of God. Let her then ſtand in the Kalendar ſtill, and, as ſhe does, appear once at leaſt every Quarter; that, when thou ſhalt look for the Day of thy Rents, or of thy Sports, or of thy Suitor, or of thy Merry-Meetings, thine Eye may not fail to encounter that Name; and think it more worthy the Regard of *Lady*, than thy Lady Profit, or thy Lady Pleaſure, or thy Lady Love, or thy Lady I know not who, not to be named, whilſt we ſpeak of Virgin. Suffer her, now ſhe has conceived Chriſt, to aſcend into the Mountain of *Juda*: Do not detain her ſtill below, in her obſcure Habitation *Nazareth* of *Galilee*, and our ſeventh Step.

7. It is, indeed, the loweſt we can go: We are now at the Ground, nay the Grave; for the Grave is but *umbra mortis;* and yet, in the Deſcription of this Place, given by a Prophet and Evangeliſt [*Iſa.* ix. *Matt.* iv.] *The Land of* Zabulon *and* Nephthali, Galilee *of the Gentiles, the People ſituate in Darkneſs, and in the Shadow of Death. Umbra mortis* is more than the Shadow, or Darkneſs either; for *umbra* is but *lux diminuta*, and Darkneſs is but the Abſence of Light; but *umbra mortis* is a deadly, killing Shadow, ſuch a one as ſome Trees caſt, which do not only intercept the cheerful Rays of the Sun, but ſhed alſo a malignant and poiſonous Influence; ſuch as *Galilee in umbra*, both for Government and Religion, as being the Skirt of all the Country, bordering upon the great Sea, far from *Jeruſalem*, the Fountain of Light; and *in umbra mortis* too, both by their daily Contagion, by the Importation of foreign Commodities and Vices together (the uſual Calamities of Maritime Coaſts) their Religion deeply tainted with all ſorts of Idolatry from their Neighbours on every Side, flowing hither as into a common River; from *Samaria*, the Reliques of *Jeroboam*'s Calves; from *Perſia* and *Babylon*, the Abominations of thoſe Countries, tranſplanted hither with their Colonies [2 *Kings* xvii.] Laſtly, that all Shrines ſhould be full, the *Phœnician* Gods, their old Acquaintance, are not ſevered. Here was a ſad Shade; but behold a vigorous Ray from κεχαριτωμένη above, to illuſtrate all;

all; a *Gratia plena*, for an Antidote to keep out all Damps and ill Airs. So that, where, perchance, to ſee a Virgin at Fifteen was once a Miracle; now it is no Wonder for a Maid of that Age to converſe with Angels (for we may collect from her Conference with *Gabriel*, they were no Strangers to her) where it was ſaid, *no good could came out of* Galilee (*nihil boni*) [John i. 47.] thence ſhall ſpring the eternal Fountain of all Goodneſs; whence they held no Prophet ſhould ariſe (*ex Galilea nullus Prophetа*) [John viii.] thence ſhall appear the Maſter and Subject of all Prophecies: *Galilee* ſhall be as *Judæa*, and *Nazareth* as *Jeruſalem*; and from thoſe dark Confines, this Horizon of the Gentiles, ſhall the bright *Star of Jacob* ſhine forth [*Numb.* xxiv. 17.] Thou then that haſt the Favour to be born in a temperate Clime, a happy Country, full of Riches and Honour, of Knowledge and Civility, art bleſſed with the Light of the revealed and ſaving Truth, do not deſpiſe thy poor Brethren under the Poles, or the Line; do not think God hath no Care of them, becauſe he hath provided better for thee; thou may'ſt not call them barbarous, becauſe their Arts or Cuſtoms are not like unto thine; much leſs may'ſt thou pronounce them damned, becauſe they are not of thy Religion. Again, thou that makeſt thy Neſt in the City, among the Palaces of Princes, and Temples of the Gods, feaſting thy Body with the Marrow of the Land, and thy Ears with the Abundance of the Word; do not inſult over the Swain that *glories in the Goad*, and makes it his Care to *give the Kine Fodder* [*Eccluſ.* xxxviii.] Is the Country rude? So is the City petulant. Doth the Peaſant lack Manners? So doth the Burgeſs Conſcience. If at *Nazareth* there be ſilly Souls that want Preaching; there be alſo, at *Jeruſalem*, Phariſees, Hypocrites, that have Sermons every Day, and never the better. Deceive not thyſelf; he that comes up from *Nazareth* but thrice a Year, to do Devotion with a ſincere Heart, ſhall riſe up in Judgment againſt thee, who dwelleſt in the holy royal City, if neither the Preſence of the King's Throne, nor the Awe of God's Altars there can keep thee from Inſolence and prophane Outrage. Laſtly, do not haſtily con-

demn nor traduce any Man, in point of Religion or Life, becauſe he converſeth with ſome whom thou thinkeſt unſound in either. Peradventure thoſe are not ſo; thou haſt been often deceived. Conſider his Parentage, or Employment, or Neighbourhood, or ſome other Relation of common Humanity, may have caſt him upon ſuch Company; yet he ſtill remain untainted: The Fiſh comes freſh from the Sea, tho' it be there in a continual Pickle; and ſome have turn'd as good Proteſtants from *Rome*, as others from *Geneva*. Remember, there was found, even in *Galilee*, a Virgin fit to entertain an *Angel*.

An *Angel*, our ſecond Perſon and Part; but he too high and too bright for our Approach at this time. Here then make we a Stand, and reflect upon the Degrees already paſt; where, if on every Step we meet our Souls, let it not diſcourage us; ſince, from this Lowneſs, the Virgin was exalted to be the Mother of Jeſus Chriſt. We would willingly bear her Company in her Exaltation, let us not diſdain the Company of her Humility.

1. Then, our Soul is a *Woman*. Let *Eve* be her Parallel. She was made for a Helper, and lo ſhe ſeduces and deſtroys us! There was no Sin nor Death, but for the Soul. For Things that want Souls (reaſonable Souls, ſuch as ours) ſin not, nor do they truly die, but fall aſunder, and all Pieces being material, remain as happy as before; but we, for our Soul's and Sin's Sake, die and die again (*morte morieris*) a double Death. Juſt then, as *Adam* called the Woman, *Mater Viventium*, when indeed ſhe was the Mother of Death: So we ſtile our Souls immortal, when it is that only by which we die. Again, like *Eve*, ſhe is ſo ſilly as to ſuffer herſelf to be cozened by a Beaſt; and not by the ſubtile Serpent alone, but by every dull Animal. Every groſs Opinion, Paſſion and Humour, makes a very Fool of her, and ſhe is ſo jealous, ſhe eaſily believes God goes about to deceive her too. For ſhe knows and confeſſes, that thus and thus God hath ſaid, and yet ſhe lends an Ear to the contrary. She is always to remember *Mater mortis*; in a Fit of Ambition, for *Eritis ſicut dii*; in a Fit of Sickneſs, for *non moriemini*; in a Fit of Curioſity, for a little Knowledge; and

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in a Fit of Luſt and Wantonneſs, *Eve* for an *Apple*. And all this *Eve* did but once, our Soul doth it every Day, and ſo the more *Woman*.

2. Then, ſhe is a Virgin too. This we hope is ſome Honour: But we muſt know, tho' in the World of Bodies there be Caſes that commend Virginity, it is not ſo in the World of Souls. Nay, Virgin Bodies are therefore honourable, becauſe they keep their Minds from being ſo. Every good Soul is a Mother, her Iſſue, Knowledge and Virtues and Graces, conceiv'd from thoſe Seeds wherewith Nature and God's Spirit hath quickned her. Would our Soul, as ſhe ought to retain, to cheriſh, to ripen, to exalt theſe, ſhe might, with Joy, behold Children, and Children's Children: So ſtill one Knowledge begets another, and one Virtue another, and one Grace another; there is none barren among them. But now ſhe is ſo taken with her own Beauty, that ſhe cares not to be a Mother, as fearing, perhaps, that Child-bearing ſhould fill her with Wrinkles; and ſhe is ſo much in Love with Liberty, that marry ſhe will not, tho' God himſelf comes a wooing with *Deſponſabo te mihi in æternum*. And yet Beauty will not be kept, nor Liberty neither. Not her Beauty; for as we ſee commonly in Bodies, while they labour to keep their Virginity, they loſe their Health, and with it the Verdure of their Complexion; that which was intended for Poſterity beſtowing itſelf into Diſeaſes: So in Souls, thoſe generous Principles, thoſe luſty Seeds of Knowledge and Action, being check'd and forbidden to diſplay themſelves into legitimate Births, break out into Monſters, Vanity and Vice, not the Children, but the Sickneſs and Blemiſh of the Soul. And her Liberty, that's gone already; for ſhe is *eſpouſed*, the third Step.

3. There is no Man but hath his favourite Study, his favourite Humour, or his favourite Vice; which being commended unto him by his Complexion or Country, his Condition or Faction, his Soul accepts and eſpouſeth herſelf to them; and now ſhe muſt not hear, nor ſee, nor judge, but as they luſt. Thus all with *Ariſtotle* is Logick, all with *Plato* Theology, all with *Pythagoras* Number. Thus the Philoſopher diſputes down Grace,

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and the Divine preacheth down Nature; the Roman Catholick couples *Calviniſm* and *Turciſm* together; and the *Calviniſt* would have us think *Rome* as Pagan as ever. Thus the ambitious Man looks on the World as a Stair to Greatneſs, the Voluptuous Man as a Bed for Delight, the Covetous on what may be turned to Gold, the Malicious on what may be converted to Gall and Wormwood. If there be a Soul that hath eſcaped theſe unhappy Spouſes, there remains one that will not be deny'd, that's the Body, the Carpenter, our fourth Step.

4. We do not mean by Body, this Fleſh of Man, this walking Statue, this *earthen Houſe*, as St. *Paul* calls it, [2 *Cor.* v.] that is but the Carpenter's Shop, he himſelf is within, the Spirit that moves it to Vegetation and Senſe. And is not this the Carpenter? You know a Mechanick he cannot work without his Tools, and all his Faculties are Organical: And you may well call him Carpenter, for he built the Houſe, he lives in it, which would quickly fall on his Head, did he not every Day repair it. Do not thou, by Luſt and Intemperance, make this Houſe yet more ruinous: That were to trouble the Carpenter with more Work than needs; and thy Soul feels Diſturbance enough already in her Contemplations, Devotions, and Raptures, by the neceſſary Noiſe and Hurry in the Work-houſe; ſuch a Vexation to ſome Philoſophers, that they were ſorry and aſhamed, and even angry with God, to ſee the Soul ſo match'd: But that needed not; for the Carpenter is nobly deſcended, *of the Houſe of* David, our fifth Step.

5. He is high-born: Eſteem him by his Actions. In the Repreſentation of ſenſible Objects, that whereby we conceive and retain Appearances, that whereby we judge and diſtinguiſh them, whereby we apprehend them as Good or Evil, and accordingly follow or decline them, muſt be thought a Piece, tho' inferior to the Mind, yet too noble to ſpring from the ſurd Womb of Matter. But the cunning Framing of the *Embryo*, that is ſuch a Maſter-piece, as plainly argues, it's Architect came from Heaven; and therefore the Work of the ſeminal Spirit hath been the Amazement of Phyſicians, hath been aſcribed

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by Philoſophers to Dæmonian Intelligences, by Prophets to God himſelf. So noble a Body would be uſed with Reverence. Hadſt thou a Servant that were a Son to ſome diſtreſſed Prince, thou wouldſt not employ him in any baſe Office; and wilt thou ſet this Carpenter of the Royal Blood to build Hog-ſtyes, and Cabins for every unclean Beaſt? For ſuch are thy Senſes and Faculties, when Luſt poſſeſſeth them. Doſt thou not hear him ſigh and groan to be thus uſed? *συστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει*, ſaith St. *Paul* [Rom. viii.] he is in an Agony, and faints under the Work; not for the Labour, but for the Indignity; and his Spouſe, the Soul, ſhe is diſcontented too: Her very Name is a Burthen to her, our ſixth Step.

6. The Virgin's Name was *Mary*: *Mary* is *Lady*, and that is the Soul's Name too. Do we not call her *τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν*, the leading, the commanding Part? We do, indeed; but ſhe hath little Cauſe to pleaſe herſelf in that Name, conſidering her preſent Eſtate; as a Lady of fourſcore to behold her Picture at fifteen, and compare it with her Glaſs. The Soul was once *τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν* ſhe ſat as a Lady, a Queen; all the inferior Faculties, like good Subjects, in Order, Place, and Obedience, attending her; and this Correſpondence at home bred Reputation abroad; no Enemy durſt appear; every Beaſt of the Foreſt ſtood in Awe of her. But now, Whither is that Majeſty fled? when from abroad every Flea vexeth her, at home her Affections and Paſſions all out of Tune; they repine, they mutiny, they break out into open Rebellions; they canton out the Dominion of the Soul among themſelves, and every one will be King in his Quarter; Anger will reign in Choler, and Luſt in Blood; Sloth in Phlegm, and Deſpair in Melancholly; and rule they will, not according to the Prince's Law, or the Law of the Land, but each by a Law of his own making; the *νόμοι ἁμαρτίας*, as St. *Paul* calls it [*Rom.* vii.] Thus is the Soul dethroned and diveſted of all. Indeed there have been Deſigns to reſtore her: The Heathen Philoſopher, her old Servant, attempted it by Virtues of all Sorts, moral, civil, intellectual; and the Chriſtian Divine, her late Counſellour, hath laboured the ſame, by encouraging her

her to resume her Right; by persuading the inferior Faculties to submit; by calling in foreign Aid, and God himself from Heaven to set all forward. Some Effect hath followed, but the Work will not lead on as long as she dwells here at *Nazareth* of *Galilee*, our last Step.

7. This World is *Galilee in umbra*, as that was, far from *Jerusalem*, the Head and Mother-City; and *in umbra mortis*, as that was, two Ways, for Manners and for Religion. For Manners, we see Vice boldly practised on all Sides, and every bad Example is *umbra mortis*, a deadly Side. First, whether it be cast by an eminent Man, as a Tree; or by a Multitude, as by a Hedge, an Arbour of small Twigs; the Shade is all one, and equally deadly, if we fly to it for Shelter. Then, *in umbra mortis* too, for Religion; for every Idol-grove casts its Shadow; and every Country, and almost every Man, hath his Idol. They that seem to agree on the same God, yet doing it on several Notions and Grounds, sometimes, unworthily and untruly, do but worship the same Name, every Man hath his Deity apart: And thus for Education, Law, or Faction, I make the true God my Idol. Now when a Man hath set up his Idol in his Heart, and planted a Grove about it, that Grove doth so beshade and benight his Reason, that no Light can follow it: Thus, as the *Ægyptians* did in their thick Darkness, he sits down and sets his Heart at rest, and seeks no further. This makes the Turk as zealous in his Religion as the Christian, the Jew as either, and the *Indian* as any; this makes the Heretick and Sectary as resolute as the true Catholick; there are Martyrs on all Sides: The Tongues walk, and the Pens walk, and the Swords fly out, 'till we slide and fall, and wallow in one another's Blood: Thus the Earth becomes full, not only of Darkness, but of cruel Habitations. Were not an Angel now seasonable with a χαῖρε κεχαριτωμένη to comfort us? Lord, let thy Holy Spirit overshadow us, and all those evil Shades will flee away! Let him as once (in our Baptism) he begat us to Christ, so descend again, and beget Christ in us! So shall this Soul of ours, this *Woman*, put on the Strength and Understand-

derſtanding of a Man; this *Virgin* ſhall bear the Fruits and Joy of a Mother, and yet, in her Purity, ſhe ſhall be a Virgin ſtill: This *Spouſe* ſhall no longer doubtfully hover between Maid and Wife, but ſhall be ever married to God, the God our Lord, the greateſt and beſt Huſband: She ſhall ſee her old Huſband, the Body, much refined; but a *Carpenter* ſtill, employed by the Holy Ghoſt, not only to build a Temple for him, but to be one. Thus ſhall the Body be reſtored to the Dignity of its Parentage, being more than *David's Son*, God's own Workmanſhip; and the Soul, whoſe *Name* calls her *Lady*, ſhall recover her Juriſdiction, and rule by her own Law, the Law of the Spirit; and all this, in ſome meaſure, here below, at *Nazareth*, but in full Perfection then when we ſhall be called up from *Galilee* to *Jeruſalem*; from the Shadow of Death to the eternal, inexpreſſible, incomprehenſible Light and Life; which is with God, and which is God.

FINIS.

24 OC 62